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SESSION 1942  
HOUSE OF COMMONS

SPECIAL COMMITTEE

ON

# HONOURS AND DECORATIONS

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE

[8 Reports]

No. 1

THURSDAY, JULY 2, 1942

TUESDAY, JULY 7, 1942

OTTAWA  
EDMOND CLOUTIER  
PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY  
1942





## ORDERS OF REFERENCE

WEDNESDAY, June 24, 1942.

Resolved—Whereas the Report of a Special Committee of the House of Commons on Titles, Honours and Decorations was presented to the House on May 14, 1919, and carried, on division, on May 22, 1919; and

Whereas the opinion has been expressed that the application of the principles embodied in the Report in the circumstances which have emerged during the present war had led to discrimination between the members of the Canadian Armed Forces; and others of His Majesty's Armed Forces, between different ranks in the Canadian Armed Forces; and between Canadians actively participating in the present war, and others of His Majesty's subjects; and

Whereas the further opinion has been expressed that it is impracticable to make provision for recognition of conduct and action involving gallantry, courage, meritorious service and devotion to duty without contravening the principles embodied in the Report;

Therefore be it Resolved:

That a Select Committee of the House be appointed to inquire into and to report upon the expediency:—

(a) of maintaining the principles that form the basis of the recommendations contained in the said Report and continuing in effect the said recommendations, or

(b) of cancelling, altering, modifying or adding to the said recommendations, in so far as they relate to honours and decorations which do not involve titles, and, if so, in what respect and to what extent.

That the Committee shall consist of the following members: Messrs. Bertrand (*Laurier*), Bruce, Fraser (*Peterborough West*), Gershaw, Graham, Hill, Kinley, Macmillan, Marshall, McCuaig, Stirling, Turgeon, Weir, Wood, Wright, and shall have power to send for persons and records, to examine witnesses under oath, and to report their opinions and observations from time to time to the House.

Attest.

ARTHUR BEAUCHESNE,  
*Clerk of the House.*

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FRIDAY, July 3, 1942.

Ordered—That the said Committee be empowered to print, from day to day, 500 copies in English and 300 copies in French of its minutes of proceedings and evidence, and that Standing Order 64 be suspended in relation thereto.

Attest.

ARTHUR BEAUCHESNE,  
*Clerk of the House.*



REPORT TO THE HOUSE

THURSDAY, July 2, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations begs leave to present the following as a

FIRST REPORT

Your Committee recommends that it be empowered to print, from day to day, 500 copies in English and 300 copies in French of its minutes of proceedings and evidence, and that Standing Order 64 be suspended in relation thereto.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

CYRUS MACMILLAN,  
*Chairman.*



## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, July 2, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations met this day at 11.00 o'clock a.m.

The following members were present: Messrs. Bertrand (*Laurier*), Bruce, Fraser (*Peterborough West*), Gershaw, Graham, Macmillan, Marshall, McCuaig, Stirling, Turgeon, Weir, Wood and Wright—13.

Mr. Macmillan, on motion of Mr. Weir, was unanimously elected Chairman. Mr. Macmillan thanked the Committee for the honour conferred upon him.

The Chairman read the Order of Reference and discussion ensued.

On motion of Mr. Graham is was ordered:—That the evidence taken be reported.

On motion of Mr. Turgeon it was decided to ask leave to print 500 copies in English and 300 copies in French of the evidence taken before the Committee.

The opinion was expressed that there should be established a Canadian Order of Merit which should be graded and limited to a specific number.

It was agreed that representatives of the Defence Departments should be called to explain the difficulties and discrepancies in awarding honours and decorations. Also that the Under-Secretary of State, Mr. Coleman, should be called.

Copies of the Proceedings and Report of the Special Committee of 1919 on Titles and Honours, together with the amendment made to that Report in the House, were ordered to be stencilled for the use of the Committee.

At the next meeting it was agreed not to call witnesses, but to study and discuss the Report of the 1919 Committee on Titles and Honours.

On motion of Mr. Weir the Committee adjourned at 11.25 a.m. to meet again at the call of the Chair.

TUESDAY, July 7, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations met this day at 11.30 o'clock, a.m. Hon. Cyrus Macmillan, the Chairman, presided.

The following members were present: Messrs. Bruce, Fraser (*Peterborough West*), Gershaw, Kinley, Macmillan, Marshall, McCuaig, Stirling, Turgeon, Weir, Wood and Wright—12.

The proceedings of the Special Committee of 1919 on Titles was discussed.

It was agreed to call as witnesses at the next meeting Mr. John E. Read, Legal Adviser, Department of External Affairs, and Wing Commander A. C. H. MacLean, C.B.E., A.M.P.—B. of P. of the Department of National Defence for Air.

The Committee adjourned at 1.00 o'clock p.m., to meet again Thursday, July 9, at 11.30 o'clock a.m.

J. P. DOYLE,  
Clerk of the Committee.



## MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

JULY 7, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations met this day at 11.30 a.m. The Chairman, Hon. Cyrus Macmillan, presided.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, the house granted permission to have 500 copies of the evidence printed in English and 300 printed in French. We have this morning the minutes of the meetings held in 1919 on the award of honours and decorations and titles. I do not know whether the members of the committee have had time to read these extracts which were sent out yesterday. Is there any discussion on these minutes?

Mr. MARSHALL: Is that all the material that is available?

The CHAIRMAN: That is all the material that is available excepting a very brief discussion in the House of Commons when the report was discussed and the amendment on the last page of the minutes was moved. No shorthand report was kept of the meetings.

Mr. BRUCE: This is a report of the committee which was submitted to the house; did the house, as a consequence of this report of the committee, adopt a resolution and, if so, what is that resolution?

Mr. MARSHALL: The resolution was carried on debate.

The CHAIRMAN: Clause B, on the second last page, Dr. Bruce, is amended.

Mr. BRUCE: It was amended, but I do not see any reference here to the fact that it was passed. Would it be accepted by the house in this form?

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: Did you look it up in *Hansard*?

Mr. BRUCE: Yes.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: It was accepted in this form on division.

Mr. MARSHALL: There was a full debate on it on May 22, 1919.

The CHAIRMAN: The report of the committee was accepted, Mr. Marshall, as submitted excepting for the amendment.

Mr. MARSHALL: There was first an amendment which was negatived on the following division: Yeas, 43; nays, 96: and then there was the motion that the report be concurred in, and it was carried on division.

The CHAIRMAN: The report as submitted was concurred in by the house.

Mr. WEIR: By the House of Commons; but not by the Senate.

Mr. BRUCE: Was it ever forwarded to the Senate?

The CHAIRMAN: I believe so.

Mr. BRUCE: Did they take no action?

The CHAIRMAN: No action.

Mr. BRUCE: They did not even move that it be not concurred in?

The CHAIRMAN: There is no record.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: It was sent forward to the Senate?

The CHAIRMAN: I understand it was; I am not sure about that. We will have to call somebody from the office of the Secretary of State.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: I suppose the Senate did not deal with it?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: I do not know how you wish to take this up, Mr. Chairman, but the amendment moved by Mr. Lemieux is not clear to me; I do not know what Mr. Lemieux meant: "That in the opinion of this committee the conferring of all honours and distinctions of the various orders upon persons domiciled or living in Canada should be discontinued."

Mr. KINLEY: Was there not a resolution by Mr. Nickle?

The CHAIRMAN: It was the Nickle report, Mr. Kinley; Mr. Nickle was chairman of the committee, and the report is contained on the second last page of the document before you. It is not clear what is meant there.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: Yes, and it has been a reason for difficulties which I think have subsequently arisen and have caused the issuance of several orders in council dealing with the matter in an endeavour to put clearly what the government of the day desired to do with regard to it.

Mr. KINLEY: On April 25, 1919, we have the resolution:—

That the committee recommend that no further hereditary titles be conferred and the extinction of the hereditary titles at present in existence in Canada not later than the death of the present possessors.

Then on April 30, it was moved:—

That in the opinion of this committee no more knighthoods should be granted.

Mr. Cockshutt moved in amendment thereto that all the words after the word "that" be struck out, and the following substituted therefor:—

The committee is of the opinion that it is not, especially at the present time, desirable . . . . .

I suppose this was after the war.

. . . to abolish titles of distinction entirely, but that it should be left to His Majesty the King and his constitutional advisers, and that the committee recommend that greater discretion be displayed in the selection of recipients and the number to be decorated.

The question was lost; the amendment was lost. Then on May 8—"all other honours"; that is not clear.

The CHAIRMAN: No, it is not.

Mr. MARSHALL: I read most of the discussion which took place in the house on May 22, and the discussion centred almost entirely around the matter of titles with which, according to the terms of reference, we have little to do in this committee.

The CHAIRMAN: That is correct; we are not concerned with that. I do not think the discussion in the House of Commons in May, 1919, is pertinent at all.

Mr. KINLEY: What is the reference to this committee?

The CHAIRMAN: Therefore, be it resolved:

That a Select Committee of the House be appointed to inquire into and report upon the expediency:—

(a) of maintaining the principles that form the basis of the recommendations contained in the said report and continuing in effect the said recommendations, or

(b) of cancelling, altering, modifying or adding to the said recommendations, in so far as they relate to honours and decorations which do not involve titles, and, if so, in what respect and to what extent.

Mr. KINLEY: We have nothing to do with honours that involve titles.

The CHAIRMAN: Titles are excluded. Now, those two instructions in the reference are given to us.

Mr. McCUAIG: Why were titles excluded from our discussion?

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot answer that. I am just taking the clause as it reads.

Mr. FRASER: That would be thrown out owing to the fact that they were cancelled at that time, and it is not proper to bring them up again.

The CHAIRMAN: The report indicates that they were cancelled, and we are dealing only with the reports to parliament.

Mr. BRUCE: They were not legally cancelled and disposed of; there was simply the adoption of the report of the committee by the house which was never concurred in by the Senate.

The CHAIRMAN: But a prayer was forwarded to His Majesty on the basis of that report.

Mr. BRUCE: In spite of that honours were conferred during the regime of Mr. Bennett—while Mr. Bennett was Prime Minister.

The CHAIRMAN: That is correct.

Mr. BRUCE: Because he disregarded the action as not binding upon him or any subsequent government.

The CHAIRMAN: We as a committee are bound by the terms of the reference we have received.

Mr. BRUCE: Yes.

Mr. FRASER: We can deal with everything that does not involve titles. We can also consider whether we wish new honours to be conferred.

The CHAIRMAN: Other than titles.

Mr. FRASER: Other than titles. We could deal with a Canadian order of merit or whatever we wish in that line?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, that is my understanding.

Mr. McCUAIG: Could we not ask that the terms of reference be enlarged to include titles?

The CHAIRMAN: We might.

Mr. WOOD: I understand that the terms of the reference are to consider this particular report which did consider titles.

Mr. McCUAIG: No, it says other than titles.

Mr. WOOD: I rather like the view taken by Dr. Bruce because of the fact that this matter was not approved by the Senate and has actually not become law.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not a question of law.

Mr. WOOD: Of course not, but I quite understand that we cannot disregard the elected representatives of a sovereign people; nevertheless in as far as Mr. Bennett recommended that certain honours be conferred he was quite within his rights so long as this had not been approved by the Senate or by the Governor General. As regards the order of reference referred to this committee, it would be quite within our rights to discuss the matter.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not a lawyer, but perhaps Mr. McCuaig would know.

Mr. McCUAIG: The terms of the reference are quite clear; they say: "Other than titles".

Mr. WOOD: Why refer to the report of the committee?

The CHAIRMAN: Reference has been made to a question of law. I do not know how far the representatives of the people can pass a law compelling His Majesty to do certain things. This report was forwarded as a prayer expressing the desirability of abolishing titles in Canada and was acted on at that time. Now, the report itself was clear, but there are two things we have to consider. Will we maintain the principles set forth in that report or will we alter or modify or add to those decorations that do not involve titles? Under that interpretation, titles are eliminated; we have nothing to do with them.

Mr. KINLEY: In the report of May 14, 1919, in the first paragraph, is that matter not left in a bit of confusion?

The special committee appointed to consider and report upon the propriety of presenting an address to His Most Excellent Majesty the King, praying that His Majesty may be graciously pleased to refrain hereafter from conferring any titles upon such of his subjects as are domiciled or living in Canada, except such titles as have reference to professional or vocational appellations conferred in respect to commissions issued by His Majesty to persons in the military or naval services of Canada, or to persons engaged in the administration of justice in the dominion; . . .

Does it confine titles to the military and to judges or does it eliminate titles altogether and say that honours shall only go to those?

The CHAIRMAN: That is my understanding.

Mr. KINLEY: That is much broader!

Mr. WEIR: As I interpret our order of reference it has nothing to do with the reports that have been submitted to us from the last time this matter was considered; we are starting out under a new order of reference, and all this information that has been supplied to the committee regarding former procedure is just to give us a birdseye view of what took place at that time. We are starting out to deal with the order of reference that has been submitted to us and this is merely information that shows what the procedure was at that time. Now we proceed from a new starting point and that has nothing to do with what is before us.

The CHAIRMAN: The report forms a basis of our discussion to a certain extent.

Mr. WEIR: It advises us on what the situation is, but we are not necessarily governed by it.

Mr. KINLEY: Would you read the first clause again?

The CHAIRMAN: . . . to inquire into and report upon the expediency:—

(a) of maintaining the principles that form the basis of the recommendations contained in the said report and continuing in effect the said recommendations.

Mr. KINLEY: Now, define the principles.

The CHAIRMAN: (b) of cancelling, altering, modifying or adding to the said recommendations, in so far as they relate to honours and decorations which do not involve titles, and, if so, in what respect and to what extent.

Mr. KINLEY: Can you define the principles?

The CHAIRMAN: The principles are as read by you in those paragraphs.

Mr. KINLEY: That is confusing. Is not the first paragraph a little confusing?

The CHAIRMAN: It would be having regard to the situation as it existed at that time.

Mr. KINLEY: If you agree that everything outside of titles is admissible and if the committee say so it is clear; but is it clear from that paragraph that other honours outside of titles can go to other people outside of judges and the military?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. KINLEY: It is?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, it is clear to me. I think the clash may come as to how far decorations that ordinarily have been granted for military service—how far these can be granted to civilians who have done meritorious work in other than theatres of war. That is one of the questions we have to discuss.

Mr. KINLEY: The first thing is to get information.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the first thing we should do is call representatives of the armed forces and others and get certain information and then come to our conclusions.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: Clearly with regard to the George Cross and George Medal this government was of opinion that meritorious conduct on the part of civilians should be recognized, but the difficulty which is left from a reading of that 1919 report is that to me it is not clear whom they considered should be awarded decorations or recognitions for meritorious services and who should not; and probably, as I pointed out the other day, there arises the interpretation of that 1919 finding with which I did not agree, and that is that the lower orders, the lower awards are under orders whose top ones carry a title which may not be used. Whether the 1919 committee meant that, I do not know. I do not see any reason for them taking exception to the Order of the Bath which has been used throughout the British forces for all services from the lowest order up to the top, and the topmost one was awarded to people with such and such seniority. Canada does not have the title. I do not see that that is any reason for discontinuing giving the C.B. I simply take the Bath as an illustration. There is a nicety with regard to what is an order of chivalry; I am not aware of the distinction between an order and a decoration. No doubt, there is a distinction, but I have not got it at my finger ends. Apparently such awards as the Victoria Cross, the Distinguished Service Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross, etc., have not been deemed to be permissible, but such awards as C.B. and C.M.G. have not been deemed to be permissible because in that order the topmost rank carries a title.

The CHAIRMAN: The two orders that do not carry a title are the Order of Merit and the Distinguished Service Order. There may be others.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: The Order of Merit is, to my mind, in a class by itself; it is the most magnificent order that I think Britain has ever had and I think it has only one grade, and it has the distinction of carrying O.M. after the name. I think it is restricted to something like a score of people.

The CHAIRMAN: Less than that.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: In consequence it has been looked upon as a recognition of very high rank indeed, far higher than any other title. Whether Canada would see fit to proceed with the idea many times put forward of having an order conferred by His Majesty, which order might contain several grades, the topmost one of which might be comparable to the O.M. and be restricted in numbers, and be granted only for very distinguished services of Canadians, and then another grade which might be less restricted in numbers, and then, perhaps, a third grade for a greater number still which used in conjunction with recognitions for valour—the V.C. and others—might be considered to fill the requirements of Canada, is a matter for discussion.

Mr. KINLEY: I suggest that we make a motion with regard to hearing members of the armed forces who have specific and technical knowledge on these matters.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think we need a motion for that.

Mr. MARSHALL: You suggested, Mr. Chairman, at the last meeting that probably we should hear Mr. Coleman from the Department of External Affairs before hearing representatives from other sources.

The CHAIRMAN: We should hear either Mr. Coleman or some other representative; there may be another official who has been more in touch with the whole situation.

Mr. TURGEON: You mean some official outside of the armed forces?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, from the Department of External Affairs.

Mr. KINLEY: I think we should hear them all.

The CHAIRMAN: We need clarification both from the Department of External Affairs and from the armed forces, and we can hear the representatives of the Department of External Affairs first. Then, there are three or four matters we should keep in mind when we are thinking about this problem: first there is the suggestion of Mr. Stirling as to what we think as a committee of the awarding of decorations for certain orders that carry with them a title—the highest order—such as the C.B. and C.M.G.: is it our opinion that these should be continued, that they should be still awarded—not the title? Then again we must bear in mind the desirability of the establishment of a Canadian order in certain cases that are not covered by the existing schedule of decorations.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: May the committee give a little consideration to this, perhaps, basic fact first: is it the opinion that meritorious service should be recognized amongst civilians as well as the fighting services?

The CHAIRMAN: That is implied, of course, in my suggestion with regard to the Canadian order. That should be cleared up.

Mr. WOOD: Would that necessarily mean that that Canadian order would be conferred for other activities besides military activities?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. WOOD: It is necessary that we should honour the constructive arts of peace rather than the destructive arts of war if we are going to establish a Canadian order.

The CHAIRMAN: It is for us to decide.

Mr. KINLEY: Should we not hear the story in its entirety before we go into what we are going to do about it?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, that is true, but we should be giving thought to these two or three questions.

Mr. BRUCE: I think it should be recognized that the order of merit to which Mr. Stirling has referred is a recent order; my recollection is that it was established not more than thirty years ago. I remember being in London at the time it was being discussed. I think we should give careful consideration to the fact as to whether we should have a Canadian order or whether we should continue to recommend to the British government that the order be conferred by His Majesty the King.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: The Canadian order must be conferred by His Majesty the King.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. BRUCE: Why should there be a separate Canadian one? His Majesty the King will give any decoration that is recommended through the proper channel, by the proper authorities of Canada. I cannot quite see why we should indulge in a separate decoration of our own when we have the privilege as a part of the British Commonwealth of Nations of recommending any decoration to the King and it will be granted.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite true, Dr. Bruce, on military decorations, but I do not think it holds so true in the case of other decorations.

Mr. BRUCE: It is also true of other decorations. The recommendation really comes from the government of the day through the usual channels to His Majesty the King, and I think I am right in suggesting that such recommendations have never been refused.

Mr. WOOD: There may be such a thing as civilian honours for some man who happens to be an agriculturist and develops some particular process, shall I say, that has added greatly to the wealth of Canada which may not apply particularly to the rest of the empire, and it seems to me that there are many such cases in agriculture. He would contribute a great deal to the wealth of Canada and, therefore, it seems to me it would be an honour that would apply to Canadians.

Mr. BRUCE: With regard to recognition for special services in regard to agriculture, we have a specific instance in Dr. Saunders, the discoverer of Marquis wheat. He was recommended a few years ago by Mr. Bennett and received an honour for that discovery; so it would not be confined to anything, it is not limited to anything or to any individual.

Mr. KINLEY: It is an Imperial decoration?

Mr. BRUCE: In his case it was.

Mr. KINLEY: All decorations are Imperial decorations in Canada now?

Mr. BRUCE: Yes.

Mr. KINLEY: There is no distinctive Canadian decoration?

Mr. BRUCE: No.

Mr. KINLEY: The question is whether there should be one.

Mr. WRIGHT: I think there should be a distinctive Canadian order. As Mr. Stirling suggested the time has come when we should give consideration to these matters. I think there should be a definite difference between decorations given for military services and those given for meritorious services in the field of civilian endeavour. I do not think we should have the same decoration applying to the two.

Mr. KINLEY: Take the case of the lighthouse keeper, he gets a decoration if he has been in office a certain period and the postmaster gets a decoration, and the merchant marine seaman who was in the submarine area during the last war got a decoration. If he was lost his wife will get a memorial cross, but they are all Imperial decorations; even the decoration given the postmasters in Canada is an Imperial decoration.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you think that is a bit incongruous?

Mr. KINLEY: I feel that as we proceed as an independent entity of the British Commonwealth of Nations it may be that we are coming to the stage where that should be considered.

Mr. TURGEON: I take it we have two phases of the general reference before us: one we have just been discussing and the other relates to purely military honours. Why could we not proceed as soon as possible with the military honours and bring someone from the Department of External Affairs to deal with that and then make up our minds as we go along whether we wish to discuss the other one or not?

The CHAIRMAN: In other words, we would learn from the witnesses the exact nature of the problem.

Mr. TURGEON: Yes, and we can decide whether we want to tackle the other problem as we proceed with the first one. If the committee agrees we should have at our next meeting somebody from the Department of External Affairs.

Mr. KINLEY: If there is any authority on titles I suppose it is the Department of External Affairs and they should be the first to come here. We are dealing with honours within the British Empire.

Mr. BRUCE: Could we get information as to what happens in the other dominions in respect of honours?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, we will get that information.

Mr. KINLEY: That would include India, I suppose?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, and Australia and New Zealand.

Mr. KINLEY: And Ireland?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, Ireland.

Mr. McCUAIG: I think it would be well if we kept in mind what course we are going to take. The whole discussion to-day in my mind has led not to the question of what we shall do in the future but what extensions we may make with respect to titles, and Mr. Stirling spoke of starting a new system of our own here in Canada. We should not make up our minds what we will do later on. I think we should also bear in mind that we might come to the point in this committee where we might decide on the elimination of decorations, the lessening of decorations, rather than the enlargement. I think we should keep our minds open to that extent. I do not think our reference particularly suggests that we should build up a further system of decorations; I think it also refers to the question as to whether we should break down and lessen decorations.

The CHAIRMAN: It means both, "cancelling, altering, modifying or adding . . ."

Mr. McCUAIG: In our discussion to-day the question of cancellation was not mentioned; we have been discussing building up.

Mr. KINLEY: It seems to me we should recognize merit.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: I have noticed that several members in referring to a Canadian order have referred to it as a suggestion from me. I should not like that to go on the record. If you will remember when I previously alluded to it I referred to the fact that Mr. Power, speaking on this matter when it came up in March, 1941, stated as an historical fact that in 1866 Viscount Monck in a despatch to Lord Carnarvon had suggested the possibility for meeting the set of circumstances then existing by the setting up of the Canadian Order of Chivalry. Again after the last war—during the last war in 1916—a sub-committee of overseas Canadians went into the matters and again alluded to that as a possible way of handling this situation. So I really have referred to something in history rather than made a suggestion that we proceed right away and have a Canadian Order of Chivalry.

The CHAIRMAN: You were quoting an historical fact.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: Yes. And I mentioned it as a matter that this committee could possibly discuss.

Mr. GERSHAW: What is the practice with regard to giving decorations at the present time?

The CHAIRMAN: Do you mean decorations for military services?

Mr. GERSHAW: Yes, or for civilian services. Is there any authority charged with the responsibility, the cabinet of the day; who does the examining into the merits of a case with the object of deciding whether the distinction is merited or not?

The CHAIRMAN: I understand, Dr. Gershaw, with respect to military decorations they are limited in number—a certain number of decorations are available for a certain population of soldiers or airmen or naval personnel. I do not know

the exact proportion. The recommendation is made by the commanding officer to whose attention the gallantry of the individual recommended is called. If he has not personal knowledge or if he has not personally observed this action of gallantry then the decision is made by a higher officer than the commanding officer and the decoration, I believe, is then recommended to His Majesty, and granted, and the investiture takes place in Buckingham Palace.

Mr. GERSHAW: Would not that have to come through the government?

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think government consent is asked.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: I think there are two methods. One is apparently through the commanding officer on the field and the other is a form of recognition of a more general nature. As a matter of fact, the cases are examined by a committee of officers here at the Woods building and there is a recommendation to the minister, then to council, then to His Majesty.

Mr. McCUAIG: Does the recommendation to His Majesty come from the minister?

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: I think it goes from the minister to the government and to His Majesty.

Mr. BRUCE: You are speaking of Canada now?

Mr. McCUAIG: Yes.

Mr. BRUCE: All these things would naturally go through the Minister of National Defence, through the Prime Minister, through the representative of His Majesty, the Governor General, and then to the king.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: I am not sure that that applies to individual acts of gallantry which receive sudden recognition.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think it does. That will be cleared up by the representative of the Department of External Affairs.

Mr. McCUAIG: He can give us a break-down?

The CHAIRMAN: Oh, yes.

Mr. KINLEY: The Merchant Marine gets considerable attention. I know that if one of our sailors rescues a Norwegian crew, let us say, the Norwegians would send recognition to the sailors, but our merchant marine seems to be disregarded or forgotten, perhaps, is a better word, and their work to-day is so very important that they deserve new consideration.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: With regard to this interpretation which has been placed on even the lower grades of these orders, that might be used for a purpose and would prevent Canada from granting them. That is one reason why I raised the question of the wisdom of accepting that interpretation of the lower grades of the order where the top carries the title. In the United Kingdom the title matter would probably be handled by the Order of the British Empire, but as the Order of the British Empire carries in its highest grades a title it is not usable under this interpretation in Canada.

Mr. KINLEY: It has been used. They have been granted in Canada.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: On very rare occasions.

The CHAIRMAN: I think we have a good deal of food for thought as the result of this meeting and we can meet again on Thursday when we will get the information we require.

The committee adjourned to meet Thursday, July 9, at 11.30 a.m.







Canada, Honours and Decorations, 1942  
- 772  
SESSION 1942

HOUSE OF COMMONS

11 XC 2  
- 42 H52  
SPECIAL COMMITTEE

ON

# HONOURS AND DECORATIONS

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE

No. 2

THURSDAY, JULY 9, 1942

WITNESS:

Mr. John E. Read, K.C., Legal Adviser, Department of External Affairs.

OTTAWA  
EDMOND CLOUTIER  
PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY  
1942





## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

HOUSE OF COMMONS, ROOM 277,  
THURSDAY, July 9, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations met this day at 11.30 o'clock a.m. Hon. Cyrus Macmillan, the Chairman, presided.

*Members present:* Messrs, Bruce, Fraser (*Peterborough West*), Gershaw, Graham, Hill, Kinley, Macmillan, Marshall, McCuaig, Stirling, Weir, Wood, Wright.

*In attendance:* Mr. E. H. Coleman, K.C., Under-Secretary of State; Mr. John E. Read, K.C., Legal Adviser, Department of External Affairs; Brigadier O. M. M. Kay, Deputy Adjutant General (Army); Paymaster Commander R. A. Pennington, R.C.N.V.R., Secretary of the Naval Board; Wing Commander A. C. H. MacLean, C.B.E., of the Department of National Defence for Air with Flight-Lieutenant C. T. Mee, R.C.A.F.

Mr. John E. Read, Legal Adviser of the Department of External Affairs, was called. The witness read his submission and was examined thereon. In the course of his deposition he filed the following documents:

1. Statement Showing Honours and Awards, Royal Canadian Navy, Army, Royal Canadian Air Force.
2. Analysis of Awards upon a comparative basis showing those available to the Canadian and to the United Kingdom Forces.
3. Despatch No. 676, December 24, 1941. Canada House to External Affairs.

Copies of the said documents were distributed to each member of the Committee. At the conclusion of his testimony Mr. Read was thanked by the Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, for his very illuminating presentation, and he was allowed to retire subject to recall.

At 1.05 o'clock p.m., the Committee adjourned to meet again at the call of the Chair.

ANTOINE CHASSÉ,  
*Acting Clerk of the Committee.*



## MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

JULY 9, 1942\*

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations met this day at 11.30 o'clock a.m. The Chairman, Hon. Cyrus Macmillan, presided.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, before we proceed to hear our witness, Mr. Stirling would like to make a statement.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: Mr. Chairman, if I may I should like to allude to the Canadian Press despatch which assumes that a Canadian Order of Chivalry was a suggestion of mine. You will remember that I drew attention to the fact that the Minister of National Defence for Air in March of last year had alluded to it in its historic connection and that it had been one of the matters which we had discussed informally at the first meeting of this committee—indeed, I think it was mentioned by you, Mr. Chairman, as one of the matters which it might be proper for this committee to consider—and as a matter of accuracy it would be better that the suggestion should not be described as mine or that of any other individual member of the committee.

The CHAIRMAN: This morning Mr. John E. Read, legal adviser of the Department of External Affairs has kindly consented to give us information on the background of the whole problem. I will call Mr. Read.

JOHN E. READ, Legal Adviser, Department of External Affairs, called.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Read, I understand you have a prepared statement giving information with regard to the various decorations and that some documents in relation thereto have been passed to the members of the committee?

The WITNESS: Yes, I have some documents.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you proceed in your own way, please?

The WITNESS: Well, I thought that it might be helpful to the members of the committee, in considering the matters referred to it, if I gave a rough outline of the course which has been followed with regard to this matter and then if I could answer any questions that the members of the committee would like to put to me. I cannot be certain that I shall be able to give the answers to all the questions, but I will either give answers or make the answers available.

Now, while the origin of this whole question goes pretty far back, I do not know whether I would be justified in going back of the course that was followed after the House of Commons resolution of May 14, 1919. The resolution was based upon the action of a committee in the House of Commons headed by Mr. Nickle, and it is commonly referred to as the Nickle resolution. It took the form of an address to His Majesty the King requesting two things: first, that His Majesty should refrain from conferring any titles of honour or titular distinction upon subjects domiciled ordinarily resident in Canada, saving professional or vocational titles; and secondly, cancellation by legislation or otherwise of existing hereditary titles conferred on persons domiciled or ordinarily resident in Canada.

In addition to the formal resolution the committee made three suggestions: the first, a proposal to save the titles of right honourable and honourable which, otherwise, would have gone with the resolution; and second, the saving of

the Victoria Cross, the Military Medal, the Military Cross, the Conspicuous Service Cross and similar decorations for exceptional valour or devotion to duty; and the third recommendation was for action to prevent persons domiciled or ordinarily resident in Canada from accepting and enjoying or using titles of honour or titular distinctions hereafter conferred by foreign rulers or governments. The address to the King was sent to the Colonial Secretary by the Governor General in June of 1919 and formally acknowledged; and in the interval between 1919 and the present time the action situation has been somewhat confused. No action was taken with regard to the cancellation of hereditary titles—no action from London, if I might put it that way—and in the interval five appointments have been made. Perhaps I should say that in the interval between 1919 and the revival of titles when Mr. Bennett was prime minister. During that period there were five appointments made which would clearly offend the Nickle resolution. There were two M.B.E.s given for military service in Russia and one M.B.E. was given on December 22, 1919; and there was one knighthood on December 22, 1919, in the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and there was a K.C.M.G. given; and practically speaking there were five instances. Immediately following the resolution it then became the practice not to award any titles to Canadians without first making a reference to the Canadian government.

*By Mr. Bruce:*

Q. May I interrupt? You said that an order was given by the Order of St. John of Jerusalem?—A. Yes.

Q. A knighthood?—A. Yes.

Q. You are not inferring, of course, that that has anything to do with the Nickle resolution, are you? Because that is not given by the sovereign in the same way that a K.C.M.G. or a C.B. or a K.B.E. is given. It is an order distinct and separate by itself and is not one to which any government recommends any of its citizens?—A. No, but it is graded among the orders.

Q. I think, therefore, it is by itself. I think it is excluded definitely from the provisions of the Nickle resolution?—A. That is the course that has been followed by all the governments—not treating the Order of St. John of Jerusalem as being covered by the Nickle resolution.

Q. Since you referred to it I thought you were inferring that?—A. As a matter of fact, in that instance it was awarded against the protest of the Canadian government. At the beginning that order was regarded as being covered by the resolution, but in the subsequent history of the problem, let us say, from the 20's on there seems to be general recognition that the Order of St. John of Jerusalem should not be covered by the Nickle resolution.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not specifically excluded?

The WITNESS: No.

Mr. BRUCE: It could not in any sense be regarded as on a par with the other titles to which the resolution referred.

The CHAIRMAN: But it is an order of chivalry, is it not?

Mr. BRUCE: It is, but it is within the order itself—the granting is by the order itself and is not on the recommendation of any government.

Mr. KINLEY: Still, it is granted by the sovereign.

Mr. BRUCE: Well, the sovereign happens to be head of the order, but there is nothing which makes it necessary that the sovereign should be the head of the order. The sovereign at the moment is the head of the order.

Mr. KINLEY: Are you sure of that point?

Mr. BRUCE: The Duke of Connaught was head of the order at one time.

The CHAIRMAN: The fact is that precedent has excluded it from the Nickle resolution.

*By Mr. Kinley:*

Q. Mr. Read, the Nickle resolution was a resolution of the House of Commons?—A. Yes.

Q. And Mr. Bennett declared it had no effect, which would practically be a declaration from the government; no action has been taken since, would it be assumed then that the Bennett announcement is the law of the country now?—A. In so far as the law is concerned?

Q. I mean the rule?—A. It would not have any legal force, but as you know there has been a difference of opinion between Mr. Bennett's government and Mr. King's government on the question of whether or not they would regard a resolution of the House of Commons as politically binding upon them. Now, Mr. Bennett took the position in the 30's that he did not regard the resolution as politically binding upon him, but the present government has on more than one occasion—for example in 1938—formally taken the position that they regarded the resolution as binding upon them.

Q. Where will we find that?—A. There probably are some instances in which the matter is referred to in the House of Commons, but the most formal statement was made in that connection back in May, 1938.

Q. By the prime minister when Mr. Bennett was appointed?—A. No, this was not a published communication—a communication to the government of the United Kingdom in which they stated that the government considered it should be guided by the House of Commons resolution on May 22, 1919; so that the actual position forming the practice in this country has depended upon which government was in power.

Now, I should like to come to the way in which the problem developed at the commencement of the present war. At an early stage in the war the question of awards for services in the armed forces was raised by the government of the United Kingdom, and the first communications in October and November of 1939 there were inquiries as to the course which the Canadian government would be following with regard to awards to the armed forces, and the first question which arose in practice was the position of Canadians who were in the British forces. They might be in the British forces in two ways: in the first place, there were a good many young Canadians who had gone over and joined up directly in the British forces, particularly in the Royal Air Force in the years preceding the war; and the other way in which they might be there is by attachment; that is when the members of the Canadian Navy, Army or Air Force, were attached to British units. Now, the position taken was that in so far as the ordinary medals and decorations were concerned they should be available to Canadians on precisely the same basis as to the British, the Australians, the South Africans, and so on, except in the case of awards in the orders of chivalry which were regarded as not being available to Canadians, that is to persons domiciled or ordinarily resident in Canada, by reason of the terms of the Nickle resolution.

Then an interdepartmental committee was set up at the end of 1939, of which I happened to be chairman, and that committee included representatives of the armed forces and of the Department of the Secretary of State for Canada and the Department of External Affairs, and that committee has been studying this problem and working on it during the intervening period. In April, 1940, a procedure was established to provide for the making of awards in the Canadian armed forces. That, of course, would be regardless of whether the individual was domiciled or ordinarily resident in Canada, but belonged to Canadian Army, Air Force or Naval formations overseas or elsewhere. The first action

taken related solely to the individuals who happened to be in British units. The procedure established in 1940 covered the Royal Canadian Navy, the Canadian Army overseas, the Royal Canadian Air Force squadrons, and so forth; but there again the procedure was limited to decorations and medals other than awards in the Orders of Chivalry. There was a distinction drawn which is not very easy to justify on a logical basis, and it was recognized that an award could be made for the Distinguished Service Order which actually is an order of chivalry, but an order of chivalry that does not contain any rank that involves a title. The general basis of the procedure was to substitute recommendations from the Governor in Council for the procedure in England which took the form of recommendations by the Secretary of State for War, the First Lord of the Admiralty, or the Secretary of State for Air, so that every Canadian recommendation finally comes down to the Governor in Council and is then transmitted to the King. There are minor variations in the procedure followed in as far as the navy is concerned. As I pointed out the orders of chivalry have been kept out of the scheme of awards by reason of the view taken that they could not be awarded to a Canadian, whether they involved a title or not, by reason of the terms of the resolution.

I think at this point I might very well refer to two of the documents which I have asked to be circulated for the information of the committee. We have prepared a document which is entitled: "Honours and Awards, Royal Canadian Navy, Army, Royal Canadian Air Force", which sets forth the awards available for service during the present war. That document commences with the Victoria Cross, then there is the George Cross, the Order of the Bath, the Order of St. Michael and St. George, the Order of the British Empire, the Distinguished Service Order, the Royal Red Cross, and so on—there are twenty in all.

*By Mr. Bruce:*

Q. Would you designate the Royal Red Cross as an order of chivalry?—A. Well, it is sometimes referred to as an order of chivalry, but it has never been treated as excluded by the Nickle resolution. The line is a practical line that was drawn rather than a purely theoretical line.

The second document which I have asked to be distributed is marked "Appendix: Analysis of Awards upon a comparative basis showing those available to the Canadian and to the United Kingdom forces"; and the third document is a copy of a despatch dated the 24th December, 1941, received from the High Commissioner for Canada.

Now, to come back to these documents, I have referred to them because I am going to say a word or two now about the present scheme of awards, and I will have to go to the documents from time to time as I go on, and I thought it was just as well to call your attention to them. There are three classes of awards: immediate awards, operational awards and periodical awards. Immediate awards are invariably based upon gallantry and they are normally made immediately by the commander by virtue of a special authority conferred upon him by the King. Authority, for instance, is given to the Commander in Chief of the Middle East, or the Chief of the Bomber command, or the Chief of a Fighter Command. When the British army was in France there was an authority given to Viscount Gort to make immediate awards. An immediate award is made by the commander immediately without reference to a minister or a government and without even reference to the King, the authority having been given by the King in advance on his behalf to make the immediate award. The object, of course, is this: let us say that a young man does a particularly fine piece of work and that it is most desirable that the commander should be able on the same day to take a medal and pin it on his chest—a delay of two or three days may be a very serious matter in connection with the Victoria.

ross say—perhaps I should not say the Victoria Cross because the Victoria Cross is always reserved for the King—but take the award of the Military Cross or the Military Medal.

*By Hon. Mr. Stirling:*

Q. Is that restricted to just certain awards? You mentioned those two.

MR. FRASER: Does the George Cross come under that?

THE WITNESS: No, but it is restricted to certain awards of ordinary decorations and medals for gallantry, other than the Victoria Cross. I think practically all can be made the subject of immediate award. For instance, the D.F.C. can be made as an immediate award, say, by Air Officers in Chief of the Bomber Command or the Fighter Command or the Coastal Command in England where active operations are going on. That power is never given to a commander except in major operations which are active in their character and on a large scale.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. That is a rather important honour. Would there be a specific statement of the powers and under what circumstances a commanding officer could use that power?—A. In the warrant the limitations upon the powers are set forth; the conditions upon which the award can be made are laid down in the warrants constituting the award, and the broad principles which set the standards are worked out in greater detail and laid down by a committee formed by the King personally and including representatives of the armed forces in England and the various departments that are concerned. Of course, in England the civilian departments are concerned just as much as the service departments.

Q. I think it might be interesting, Mr. Chairman, and valuable to the committee, if we had the actual wording of the warrant given to officers in the field?—A. That could not be done. The government could not get it themselves; it is something that the King does, and there is no way that we could get the warrant that is given, let us say, to a commander in chief, or to the chief of the bomber command.

Q. Surely it would be possible to get the conditions under which the granting of an honour by a commanding officer in the field would be governed?

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think that is relevant, is it?

MR. GRAHAM: It is relevant in this way, Mr. Chairman, that any of us who had experience in the last war always looked with a little misgiving on the methods of distribution.

THE CHAIRMAN: You are referring to coming up with the rations?

MR. GRAHAM: Well, while we are on this matter we might as well examine it, if we can do so, in order to safeguard unfair and unwise actions, because it always lowers the value of a decoration in the eyes of the troops if there is any suggestion of favouritism or "coming down with the rations", to use that expression.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think, Mr. Graham, that that is really within the terms of our reference. It is not our function to decide on what basis a commanding officer recommends a man for the Military Medal or the D.C.M.; we are to consider whether the terms of the Nickle resolution should be extended or reduced or cancelled or adjusted.

MR. GRAHAM: Is not that pretty broad?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes; I do not think it goes back to the field of battle.

MR. GRAHAM: I will consider it, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, you can consider that.

The WITNESS: Now, I have referred to the immediate award. The operational award is an award based upon conduct during operations which may consist of sustained courage or repeated acts of gallantry, and it is normally given on a periodical basis. The ordinary scheme of distribution is by the New Year's list, and the King's Birthday list, and within those lists a very large proportion of the awards are operational. Let us say they are based upon the actual work of the man during the course of the operation.

Now, the third class is commonly referred to as the periodical award, and that is dealt with in the birthday list and the honours list, and it covers cases where an individual, without isolated instances of gallantry and perhaps not in the course of operations, has shown an exceptional type of devotion to duty which is regarded as deserving of recognition. So that the New Year's and Birthday honours. I think, almost invariably in the course of the war contain awards that are operational awards or are not operational.

If you bear in mind that threefold division of awards and bear in mind that the whole scheme of recognition of work in the services—and, of course, in the case of England it goes far beyond the services, it covers the whole field of civilian activity during the war; A.R.P. work, firefighters and things of that kind which are clearly excluded by the Nickle resolution—the whole scheme is based upon a threefold type of recognition; the type which is recognized by the immediate—individual instances of exceptional gallantry; the operational—continuous courage and devotion to duty over a period, not necessarily accompanied by a spectacular instance of gallantry; and third, recognition of an exceptional type of devotion to duty and service which is regarded as deserving of recognition in itself.

I would like to go from that to the classification of awards in relation to the ranks of the armed forces. I have spoken of in those two tables which I have given to you, and you will notice that some types of awards are available only to non-commissioned officers and men and there are other types that are available only to junior commissioned officers and warrant officers, and there are other types for senior officers, and there is a fourth class for admirals and generals and, air marshal. The line is not drawn with absolute precision between those four different grades, but that is roughly the scheme of awards. You have the type of awards that are available in practice to the high ranking officers—generals, admirals and so on; the type that is available to colonels and majors, with the brigadier sort of standing on the line between the two; then you have the type for captains, lieutenants and warrant officers; then you have the types that are available for other ranks. That is the system which is followed in every part of the British Commonwealth, excepting Canada; we are the only part of the empire that does not come into the general system of awards. Now, looking at this appendix which I have prepared for you, I would like to explain what I have done there. I have taken all the decorations that are available to the services, limiting myself for this purpose to the men, in order to avoid confusion, but in order to show the type of awards which are available to Canadians and the type of awards which are available to members of United Kingdom forces. As a matter of fact, I might just as well have put, instead of United Kingdom forces, Australia or New Zealand or South Africa, because they all are on the same basis. The Canadian forces are the only ones that are subject to limitations and restrictions. I show the statement in three columns. In the left-hand column I have the rank in which the first group consist of admirals, generals, air chief marshals; the second column shows the awards that are available to Canadians, and the right-hand column shows awards that are available to a United Kingdom general or an Australian or a New Zealander or a South African. I have put the awards in brackets and with an asterisk where they are theoretically available to, say, an admiral or general, but where in the actual working out of the thing they ordinarily do not get them. For instance, the Victoria Cross is a very rare

decoration. It is not uncommon for it to be won by, say, a lieutenant-colonel, or by a captain or by a private soldier, but the occasions where, say, a general or commander-in-chief or the commander of an army would run up against circumstances that would lead him to win the Victoria Cross are practically unknown. As a matter of fact, he would be court-martialled if he won it. That sounds queer, but I know of at least two instances in the last war in which all recognition was disallowed to relatively senior officers because they had broken the regulations which led to their doing an act which would normally have resulted in winning the Victoria Cross. Let us say that there is a regulation.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. In the first division dealing with admirals and generals and air chief marshals, in practice there is no recognition in Canada?—A. In practice there is no recognition in Canada, none whatever in practice. Now, the second class consists of vice-admirals, lieutenant-generals, air marshals. The G.C.B. and K.B.E. are not available as the Knight Grand Cross is only given to an admiral distinguished from a vice-admiral. The third class is rear admiral, major-general, air vice-marshal, and there again the same situation appears.

Q. In No. 2 the D.S.O. is available; there is no asterisk?—A. There should have been an asterisk; it is a typographical error.

*By Mr. Kinley:*

Q. It is very faint?—A. Yes, it did not go through. The same situation appears with regard to rear admiral, major-general and air vice-marshal. Then you come to commodore, captain; brigadier, colonel; air commodore, group captain, and you have the same situation with regard to C.B., C.M.G., C.B.E., and you are now getting to a point where the brackets and the asterisks disappear from the other decorations, and then you come to No. 5, and you see the situation as it is there. There is still that difference as far as C.B.E. and O.B.E. are concerned. And in the last three decorations I have made a note in the left-hand column to indicate that the D.S.C. is available to the navy only, and the D.F.C. to the air force only.

Q. Why is a Distinguished Service Cross not applicable to the army? I notice that the Distinguished Service Order is applied to the other services—the Distinguished Service Cross applies only to the navy and the air force?—A. Yes, it is a naval decoration.

Q. I notice that it is also attached to the air?—A. Only the fleet air arm. The D.F.C. and the A.F.C. are limited to the air force. Then in 6, where we come to the lieutenant-commander, major, squadron leader, you will notice that the brackets and the asterisks have come again, because while, theoretically speaking, a lieutenant-commander or a major can be made a C.B. or a C.M.G., I think it is practically unknown, while it is theoretically possible.

Now, I do not want to refer in detail to the whole of this table, but you will find that it is only when you come to page 4 covering petty officers and ratings, N.C.Os. and aircraftmen that you have a complete equality of opportunity as between the members of the Canadian forces and the other forces, and that equality of opportunity is purely theoretical and it is not practical. Let us say that theoretically a Canadian private soldier or an A.C.2 can get a B.E.M., practically speaking his chance of getting a B.E.M. is very slight as compared with a corresponding rank in the British forces. The reason is that with the scheme of awards the K.C.B. and the K.B.E. and the C.B. and the C.B.E. and the O.B.E. and so on, are a part of a system of awards governing a certain type and quality of work ending up with the B.E.M., and where, let us say, a major-general has shown a type of competent devotion to duty and deserves recognition you give him, let us say, a K.B.E., and where a major or lieutenant-colonel shows the same sort of thing you give him, let

us say, an O.B.E., and you come down to the N.C.O. and the private soldier and he gets the B.E.M. in the same system. If you exclude every award except one, the practical result is that it is not practical to make the awards of the B.E.M. on the same basis, and they have not been made in the present war. If you look at the birthday honours and New Year's honours and count up the number of B.E.Ms. given to Canadians you will find that they are insignificant. There are a few cases in which the British Empire Medal has been given for gallantry, as it frequently is; it has been treated practically speaking as operational or immediate medal, and they have been given; but I think there are not more than one or two instances where a B.E.M. has been given for the exceptional type of devotion to duty which would earn the decoration in as far as a member of the other forces is concerned.

Now, the terms of reference make statements with regard to claims of discrimination, and there can be no doubt as to the existence of a feeling within the Canadian armed forces that their members are subject to discrimination as compared with members of United Kingdom forces and indeed of other forces fighting on our side in this war. Perhaps, if I could speak for a moment not as a civil servant but as a person who is giving information from his own knowledge, I might say that I know that feeling exists. I have two sons in the armed forces and I know what they think about it and I know what their friends think about it. I know their feeling about it. I am not merely a civil servant but I am a parent. I have a son at the present time fighting in Egypt, and I think it is unjust that he should be disqualified from getting, let us say, an M.B.E. if he happens to earn it. I have interposed that, and I hope you will not mind me referring to it, because it represents a practical side of the question.

Mr. BRUCE: I agree with you.

The WITNESS: He happens to be in a line of work where the men do the sort of thing that would be recognized by an M.B.E., but where it is almost unthinkable and certainly almost impossible that he would earn, let us say, a Military Cross; and it does not seem to me, as an individual, reasonable that he should be excluded from an award if he happens to earn it.

But I would like to look at this question of discrimination which results from the quite unintended effect of the Nickle resolution. I do not believe for one moment that when the House of Commons passed that resolution they had in mind the exclusion of members of the Canadian forces from the wide range of new decorations. Now, I would like to refer to particular cases and you will appreciate that it is not possible for me to give you actual cases, but I can give you the sort of circumstances in which the effect of the resolution disqualifies a Canadian from receiving appropriate recognition for the services that he is giving to his country in the present war. The first type of discrimination that I can give you is this—and this is not very far away from actual cases: Now, let us suppose that a member of the Canadian army is serving, let us say, with a British division, attached, and is engaged on a job such as the problem of transporting supplies or ammunition, and as this war has developed that has become a job which is one of the most important in the war, requiring a high degree of courage and a high degree of competence. If he shows an exceptional type of ability—for instance, take a case in the battle of Flanders and Dunkirk—there were a number of awards to persons doing that type of work—for instance, the head of the supply service of a division who in a situation such as Dunkirk presented might be the man who saved his division. If he is recommended for the O.B.E. or the C.B.E., and he happened to be a Canadian he would be automatically disqualified. It is true that the present situation does not disqualify the person whose award is

based upon a single spectacular act of gallantry; he can get his V.C. or a Military Cross or whatever it happens to be; but he can receive no recognition for that long type of sustained gallantry which may lead, let us say, to the O.B.E., the C.B., or the C.B.E.

If you will examine the records of the *London Gazette* you will find the second type of case. I am not referring to any particular individual case, but I am referring to a state of affairs which involves the problem of discrimination. Take, during the battle of Britain, the problem of defeating the German air attack on England which involved a very high degree of courage and devotion to duty by the ground forces of the Royal Air Force and of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Well, now, resulting from the battle of Britain there were a large number of instances of recognition of the work that was done under conditions of danger and great difficulty by the ground crews—it might be a pilot officer or a flight sergeant or a leading air craftsman. We had in England at the time side by side with the British R.A.F. formations and side by side with other formations our ground crews doing the same sort of job and doing it, I think, as well. The recognition for that sort of work ordinarily takes the form of the M.B.E. Well, no Canadian could receive any decoration for that sort of thing during that period because he was not eligible for an order of chivalry, let us say, the O.B.E. or whatever it happened to be.

The third type of case that I would like to give you—I am putting this on a comparative basis and I am not attempting to criticize anybody—but here are two ships which are sunk in the Atlantic, one of which is registered in Liverpool, England, and the other is registered in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; in both cases the second officer of the ship and the ship's carpenter show exceptional courage and devotion to duty in getting the lifeboats away and bringing them in, say, to Boston. In those instances the second officer and carpenter are eligible to receive the George Medal, if that is the appropriate award, no matter where the ship is registered, but if the appropriate award happens to be the B.E.M. or some other decoration, why the second officer and the carpenter from the Liverpool, Nova Scotia ship are automatically disqualified because the Nickle resolution puts a complete ban on civilian decorations. The only reason the George Medal and the George Cross were saved was that the George Medal and the George Cross bridged the gap between the civilian and the soldier, and when it was established, you might say half of it was banned by the Nickle resolution and the other half was not. As a matter of fact, they have gone ahead—there have been awards made of the George Medals to Canadians.

*By Mr. Kinley:*

Q. A man in the merchant marine is still a civilian?—A. Yes.

Q. There has been no action declaring him to be on active service?—A. No.

Q. Therefore he is not eligible for military awards?—A. No. In England he is. The difficulty is that it is a civilian award.

Q. No, but in England he is not. As a member of the merchant marine he is not eligible for the military award, is he, like the Military Medal?—A. No, but he is eligible for the British Empire Medal, and there are other awards that are available to him but from which he is excluded by the fact that the Nickle resolution did not save civilian awards.

Q. Members of the merchant marine got medals in the last war for being in the submarine area; in what way did they get those?—A. That was before 1919.

Q. To-day the merchant marine is rather bare in as far as recognition is concerned?—A. Yes. Now, another type of case—I am bringing these cases to your attention in order that you may be in a position to appreciate the effect

in practice of the exclusion of Canadians from the lower grades of the orders of chivalry—this is a type of case which might concern a Canadian Army nurse who, say, was dancing in a London restaurant when the building was hit by a German bomb and collapsed. She shows great presence of mind and courage and devotion to duty by attending and giving first aid to the 30 or 40 survivors in the wrecked building. Had she been a British Army nurse she would have been eligible for the M.B.E., but by reason of the fact that she is a Canadian Army nurse she would be automatically excluded. That is another instance of the type of things that are excluded by the operation of the resolution.

Now, here is another type of case which might concern a girl on duty at a munition plant when fire threatened the destruction of the plant and she shows courage and devotion to duty in remaining at her post and carrying on. The circumstances are such that if this had happened in Scotland she would have had the B.E.M., but she would be excluded because civilian decorations are not available to Canadians.

*By Mr. Wright:*

Q. Would the George Medal not be available?—A. As I say, the George Medal would be available, but the job might not be one which would qualify her for the George Medal. There are various gradations as regards conduct for the George Medal. Now, they gave the George Medal to a schoolteacher in Calgary in the last Birthday Honours, but there may be conduct that does not reach the standard of the George Medal but does reach the standard of the British Empire Medal, which is just a bit lower, and the exclusion of civilian decorations generally excludes the young woman in a case of that sort.

I take another type of case—I do not say it is likely to arise, but there is a possibility—and that is supposing we had conditions in Halifax or Vancouver in which there were heavy air raids, similar to Pearl Harbour. Now, the fire fighters and the A.R.P. personnel and the Red Cross personnel and personnel of that sort would be automatically excluded from every type of recognition except the George Cross or the George Medal. The final case I want to refer to is the kind that is referred to in Mr. Massey's despatch. Let us suppose we have a stenographer in Canada House in London—she does not have to be in Canada House, she can be with the immigration service or the munitions service—but let us say that she has shown exceptional courage and devotion to duty in pounding a typewriter, and a lot of them have done so. There are young women in Canada House who have earned recognition ten times over, because if a person pounds a typewriter at a time when you have been blown out of your house by bombs and lost all of your possessions the night before and when the area you are in has been heavily bombed and you are within reach of splinters, and there is a most important telegram that has to be got off to Ottawa, and you keep on pounding that typewriter—I think that person has earned some sort of recognition. Those stenographers in Canada House are automatically excluded from recognition.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. In regard to that type of recognition that you are speaking of now, I was wondering whether technically that would be a decoration?—A. Not necessarily. It might very well be the M.B.E.—that is a member of the Order of the British Empire.

Q. Would that be an honour or a titular distinction or a decoration?—A. That is a lower grade of the Order of the British Empire that does not include a title. It does not carry any title with it, but it is excluded by the Nickle resolution.

Q. My point is that the Nickle resolution does not exclude specifically decorations for civilian persons?—A. Well, it has been interpreted as excluding the orders of chivalry apart from the question of whether they carry a title.

Q. By whom? By your department?—A. Not by my department, but that is the interpretation that has been placed upon it—that has been followed pretty consistently over a long period of time.

Q. It does exclude honours, titular distinctions; but negatively it sets up—  
“ . . . do not recommend the discontinuance of the practice of awarding military or naval decorations, such as the Victoria Cross, Military Medal, Military Cross, Conspicuous Service Cross, and similar decorations to persons in military or naval services of Canada for exceptional valour and devotion to duty.” Nor does it deal with decorations for civilian persons?—A. It specifically reserves, let us say, the Victoria Cross and the Military Cross and so on in the interpretation that has been put on it. I have never given an opinion on it myself, but the interpretation that has been placed upon it is that the civilian decoration, let us say, has not been preserved in the suggestion.

The CHAIRMAN: The resolution of May 8, 1919, states:—

Resolved,—That inasmuch as this committee has decided to recommend that no further titles or orders be conferred by His Majesty the King on Canadians the committee is opposed to the acceptance by Canadians of titles or orders. . . .

Those orders to which Mr. Read refers are the orders of chivalry.

Mr. GRAHAM: But not with decorations. I asked whether it was a decoration or an order or a titular distinction.

The CHAIRMAN: This is an order.

Mr. GRAHAM: The M.B.E. is an order.

*By Mr. Kinley:*

Q. What is your definition of a title as it refers to the Nickle report?

Mr. BRUCE: That is a tough question.

The WITNESS: Well, if you ask me for my personal opinion, I would say that title was a prefix of honour that you attached to a man's name, but the position that has been taken with regard, let us say, to the O.B.E., which does not make you a “sir”, or the C.B.E., you do not become Sir So-and-So, and your wife does not become a lady but the interpretation placed upon that is based upon the specific reservation of the medals and decorations, and it is based upon the fact that in the discussion in the House of Commons there were statements that indicated that most of the members of the House of Commons thought they were banning the C.B., the C.B.E., and the O.B.E., and so on, and that is the way in which the resolution has been interpreted in practice.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. My point was this, there is nothing in the Nickle resolution that would preclude Canada from recognizing all decorations to persons other than those engaged in the army, navy, or air force in Canada. My point in raising that question is that I wonder if your statement of the problem and the suggestion that we should find a remedy for the situation which is not fair and equitable in this war—I wonder if we could solve it by decorations rather than by titular distinctions or orders?—A. It depends upon how far you carry decorations. I was going to deal for a moment with what it seems to me to be possibly—I am not suggesting any course of action for the committee, I am trying to clarify the problem and the way of meeting it.

The CHAIRMAN: Are they not synonymous terms?—A. A decoration may be an order. The D.S.O., for example, is a decoration, is it not?

Mr. BRUCE: I was going to raise that point that an order is also a decoration.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. BRUCE: Every order carries a decoration which you can wear on your breast. I do not see how you can distinguish.

The CHAIRMAN: The Nickle resolution excludes orders other than the Distinguished Service Order.

Mr. KINLEY: Speaking about civilian decorations, postmasters are decorated and lighthouse keepers are decorated in Canada. It is a British decoration from the King, but it is a civilian decoration.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not an order of chivalry.

Mr. KINLEY: No, but he said with regard to civilian decorations in Canada that there is none—that is what I gathered.

The WITNESS: I do not see how you can receive a civilian decoration in Canada without going against the Nickle resolution if you interpret the resolution in the way in which it has been interpreted.

Mr. KINLEY: Have they not been giving medals for long service to lighthouse keepers?

The WITNESS: I do not know. There is a King's Police Medal.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Coleman, what is the basis of the award of the Military Service Medal?

Mr. COLEMAN (Under Secretary of State): A person has to serve over 35 years—I think it is 35, but there is the most peculiar anomaly in relation to railwaymen in that those men who worked on that part of the Canadian National Railways which formerly constituted the Intercolonial are eligible and the employees in the other divisions are not eligible.

Mr. KINLEY: They were not in the government service.

Mr. GRAHAM: I rather think that the Nickle committee were attempting to exclude anything that is just a class set apart, and not the recognition of service for valour or long devotion to duty in either military or civil life; as long as the decoration did not set up a sort of aristocratic class distinguished by orders or titles. I think that is the real basis of the Nickle resolution. I am not arguing the merits of it, but I think that is the basic purpose; I think that is what they were attempting to deal with. Certainly there is nothing in their committee report—and I notice the reference to the committee draws a distinction between titular distinctions, orders and decorations—but in some clauses of the report they deal with orders, titles of honour or titular distinctions and they only use the word decoration when they say; "Your committee, however, do not recommend the discontinuance of the practice of awarding military or naval decorations...". This is a negative way of saying that they do not recommend doing away with naval and military—and I presume now air—

The CHAIRMAN: I think it is the duty of this committee obviously, and particularly after listening to the statement of Mr. Read, to consider whether or not we wish to recommend that orders which do not carry titles shall be awarded. These are different times from 1919.

The WITNESS: I suggest it would be most helpful if this committee expressed its views as to whether civilian decorations should be available and the extent to which they should be available. Is the British Empire Medal to be available to Canadian civilians?

Mr. KINLEY: Mr. Stirling asked a question whether or not the lower orders might be considered when there is a title in the higher grades.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what I had reference to.

Mr. KINLEY: You say they are excluded?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. KINLEY: But in practice that has been violated?

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: By the interpretation of this first clause of the Nickle resolution they have always been excluded. As I remarked the other day, it has always been my opinion that it was an improper interpretation to put on that word. May I ask whether Mr. Graham was arguing that the lower grades of an order of chivalry not carrying an honour or distinction in his opinion should be excluded?

Mr. GRAHAM: No, but from reading that portion of Mr. Read's documents presented to the committee, I understand there are certain individuals who should be recognized in some way by Canada and the interpretation placed on the Nickle resolution or report excludes them from recognition; is that your argument?

The WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am suggesting there is nothing in the Nickle resolution or report that stops us from recognizing them so long as we do not intrude into orders of titular distinction or orders.

The WITNESS: Your suggestion is that on a true interpretation of the resolution—

Mr. GRAHAM: —we could set up a decoration.

The WITNESS: That civilian decorations are not excluded?

Mr. GRAHAM: No, they are not excluded. That recognition of that type that you speak of by Canada and in manner satisfy your problem as it now exists—is not that true?

The WITNESS: Yes.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: Why should civilian recognition be made impossible by the wording of that resolution? That is one thing I have never been able to understand. That phrase or clause does not attach itself only to the services; indeed it refers to recognitions of a professional or vocational character. Why then should the interpretation have been put on that in such a way that it rules out civilians?

Mr. GRAHAM: I do not think it does.

The CHAIRMAN: May we defer our discussion and let Mr. Read proceed with his statement.

The WITNESS: I would like to close my statement by attempting to outline without any recommendations of any sort courses which might be followed which might eliminate the possibility of discrimination. They have been discussed at various times, and I thought I could sum them up together without suggesting that any of them were desirable or undesirable. The first problem deals with officers of flag, general and air rank who present the most difficulty—the high ranking officers. High ranking officers of the British Army receive recognition in the form of knighthoods, in the military division of the Order of the Bath and the Order of the British Empire and to a slight extent the Order of St. Michael and St. George, but in this war it is really the Bath and the British Empire which are being used. Now, the only way in which recognition could be given to our high ranking officers on a basis that would be fair would be by the following courses: The first possibility that has been considered is awards in orders of chivalry available in military divisions without

accolade, and when an order is given without accolade the person receiving it does not acquire the title; that is, his wife does not become lady, but he has the right to put K.C.B. after his name and to wear the insignia of the order. That course was followed when General Pershing was awarded the G.C.B., Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath, at the close of the last war. Under the laws of the United States it is not possible for an American officer to acquire a title, but he received the G.C.B., without accolade, which meant he could wear the decoration and he could put G.C.B. after his name and he had the distinction and honour that was incidental to receiving, perhaps, the highest honour that a general officer could receive.

Now, the second possibility has been referred to,—I am not going to say anything about it on its merits—and that is the question of establishing a Canadian order with grades that would take the place that is occupied by the G.B.E. and K.C.B. and K.B.E.

Mr. GRAHAM: Those are orders of chivalry?

The WITNESS: They are orders of chivalry carrying titles. Now, if we come to the other members of the services, apart from the high ranking officers, it would be possible to remove any element of discrimination as between Canadians and other members of the fighting services if the position were taken that the Nickle resolution should have no application to awards of medals and decorations other than those involving titles.

*By Mr. Fraser:*

Q. That was the original idea.—A. Of the Nickle resolution?

Q. I believe so.—A. Well, I am not making any observations on that.

Q. That is what it looks like to me.

The CHAIRMAN: What is that again?

Mr. FRASER: Exactly as Mr. Read says, with regard to the Nickle resolution that it did not have anything to do with these lower grades at all; it was only to eliminate such honours as adding "Sir" to your name or "Earl."

The CHAIRMAN: It says, Mr. Fraser: "No further titles or orders".

Mr. FRASER: Well, I know, but I remember at that time that that was the talk, that they wanted to do away with the awarding of "sir" where an order might give the title of "sir" to a man.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: Where do you find the word "order"? It is not in the report that was submitted as a consequence of the committee, through the House.

The CHAIRMAN: I am quoting from the resolution of May 8, 1919.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: The resolution that was submitted? The thing that counts is what resulted from the committee's work, is it not?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes; but I think that resolution was always read in conjunction with the resolution you are quoting now as a basis of interpretation.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: If there is any basis on which governments in Canada have made their decisions it surely is on the report which was adopted by the House of Commons alone in 1919. It is historically interesting to consider with that some previous resolution which was passed, but surely this one containing these words: "... title of honour or titular distinction . . ."—

Mr. KINLEY: On May, 8, 1919, Mr. Lemieux made a motion.

The CHAIRMAN: That was defeated.

Mr. GRAHAM: The matters before the committee are not what we are concerned with; it is the house resolutions we are concerned with, is it not?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, but I am speaking of an interpretation in the application of that resolution in the years since 1919.

Mr. GRAHAM: But in speaking of a resolution you are speaking of a house resolution?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. As I interpret it, looking back over the historical background, the desire was to eliminate not only titles but any order that came within the classification in which that title lies.

Mr. KINLEY: I think you are right.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: Why did not the report of the house which was adopted and became the basis use that phraseology?

The CHAIRMAN: I do not know that, Mr. Stirling; I am not interpreting, I am simply giving the historical background of the situation.

Mr. KINLEY: Mr. Lemieux's resolution of May 8 carried nays 10, yeas 2: "That in the opinion of this committee the conferring of all other honours and distinctions of the various orders upon persons domiciled or living in Canada should be discontinued."

The CHAIRMAN: Then Mr. Cockshutt's resolution follows that on the same day.

Mr. KINLEY: It was lost.

The CHAIRMAN: The whole tendency of the discussion was the elimination of all orders and I think you will find—I think, Mr. McCuaig, that that is true of the House of Commons' discussion.

Mr. McCUAIG: Yes, (a) of the final report clarified it.

The CHAIRMAN: That only speaks of title of honour or titular distinction.

Mr. KINLEY: Of course the report would be the gospel; the resolutions that were presented and passed in the committee, if they were not interpreted in the report, have no weight.

The CHAIRMAN: I think for our purpose it does not greatly matter what the wording was at that time.

Mr. KINLEY: Except that these orders that Mr. Stirling speaks about are orders and not titles; and the question is, did the report to the house from the Nickle committee exclude them?

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: No, "any title of honour or titular distinction."

Mr. KINLEY: The Lemieux resolution would have excluded them.

The CHAIRMAN: Under the interpretation they have been excluded. It is for us as a committee to decide whether we are going to recommend—

Mr. GERSHAW: And action ever since has been guided by that interpretation.

The CHAIRMAN: Absolutely.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: And that is why we are sitting here.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think we have so much to do with the past as with the present and the future. Irrespective of what they may have meant, it is for us to decide whether we will recommend the restoration of these orders.

The WITNESS: In order to complete the record and to clarify the position, I should like to add that apart from the high ranking general officers to whom I have referred there are three things necessary: first, making available awards to the members of the armed forces in the orders of chivalry other than those involving titles; and second, the clarification of the position with regard to civilian award; and third, recognition that members of the Canadian Merchant Navy should be treated on the same basis with regard to awards as members of the British Merchant Navy, subject, of course, to the reservation given on the

question of titles. Then, I have referred to Mr. Massey's despatch. I am not going to read it; we all have copies of it. It raises the whole question as to conditions under which civilian recognition is desirable in a very clear way.

Now, gentlemen, I am very much obliged to you for hearing me.

The CHAIRMAN: The committee is very grateful to you for the information you have given. You will be available, I suppose, if we need your experience and advice again.

The WITNESS: Yes. And then my colleagues on the committee representing the armed forces will be available to give any information you may desire.

Mr. GRAHAM: I think I would like to know something of the duties, rights and privileges—what is embraced by the conferring of any order; there must be certain rules governing a distinction?

The WITNESS: You mean by becoming a member of an order of chivalry?

Mr. GRAHAM: If you join the Masons you have to perform certain duties. What happens in a case like this?

The WITNESS: I think probably Wing Commander MacLean could tell you that.

The CHAIRMAN: We are to have the privilege of hearing Wing Commander MacLean later, and I am sure he will be able to enlighten us on these points.

The committee adjourned to the call of the chair.

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SESSION 1942

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

(SPECIAL COMMITTEE)

ON

# HONOURS AND DECORATIONS

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE

No. 3

TUESDAY, JULY 14, 1942

WITNESSES:

Major-General H. F. G. Letson  
Pay Lt.-Commander R. A. Pennington  
Wing Commander A. C. H. MacLean, C.B.E.

OTTAWA  
EDMOND CLOUTIER  
PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY  
1942





## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY, July 14, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations met this day at 11.30 o'clock, a.m. Hon. Cyrus Macmillan, the Chairman, presided.

The following members were present: Messrs. Bruce, Fraser (*Peterborough West*), Gershaw, Graham, Macmillan, Marshall, McCuaig, Stirling, Turgeon, Weir and Wright—11.

Mr. Jackman, M.P., was also present, and by leave of the Committee, questioned the witnesses.

Major-General H. F. G. Letson (of the Army), was called, examined and retired.

Pay Lt.-Commander R. A. Pennington (of the Navy), was called, examined and retired.

Wing Commander A. C. H. MacLean, C.B.E. (of the Air Force), was called, examined and retired.

On motion of Mr. Bruce a vote of thanks was tendered to the above mentioned witnesses for their valuable evidence.

Mr. E. H. Coleman, Under-Secretary of State, was present, and said he would be available for the next meeting.

On motion of Mr. Turgeon, the Chairman was authorized to appoint a subcommittee to assist him in preparing a draft report for submission to the Committee.

The Committee adjourned at 1.00 o'clock, p.m., to meet again at the call of the Chair.

J. P. DOYLE,  
*Clerk of the Committee.*



## MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

JULY 14, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations met this day at 11.30 a.m. The Chairman, Hon. Cyrus Macmillan, presided.

The CHAIRMAN: Order. We are privileged to have present to-day the Adjutant General, Major-General Letson, who will make a submission with respect to the problem.

Major-General LETSON, called:

The CHAIRMAN: Will you proceed?

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, the Canadian army in regard to honours and awards is in a different and unsatisfactory position vis-a-vis British army and other armies of the commonwealth in that there are no awards which are available for officers except for gallantry in the face of the enemy. Of course, there are awards which are open to them, and gallantry not in the face of the enemy is restricted to the George Cross and the George Medal, as my understanding goes; therefore we find that in regard to senior officers in particular, who may have in the course of their duties carried out outstanding work, there are no means by which their services can be recognized under the present regulations. That, of course, puts them at a disadvantage in relation to officers of similar rank serving in the British army and in the armies of the commonwealth. Further, in the more junior ranks the army has no corresponding decoration to that available in the air force; namely, the Air Force Cross and the Air Force Medal.

This matter has been carefully considered by the army and all that I can say to you members of the committee is that it is felt that it is an unsatisfactory state of affairs that is now existing. That is all I should like to say on the matter.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions?

*By Mr. Turgeon:*

Q. When you said, General Letson, the army is at a disadvantage, if I may use that term, as compared with the air force, for instance, you meant the Canadian active army as against the Canadian air force, did you?—A. I did, yes.

*By Mr. Fraser:*

Q. May I ask if the General has read over the 1919 resolutions as we have them here?

The CHAIRMAN: The so-called Nickle resolutions?

Mr. FRASER: Yes; and if so, what is his viewpoint of those resolutions?

*By Mr. Fraser:*

Q. Do you feel that they included in the resolutions at that time the army, or whether they just included titles?—A. Well, I have read the resolutions; I have no means of determining what was in the back of the minds of the people who framed the resolution and I am not in a position, unfortunately, to state on

behalf of the army what means, if any, should be taken to correct this situation existing at the moment. I can only, as Adjutant General, point out the facts as they exist; namely, that we are in an unsatisfactory position in regard to this. I do not know whether that answers your question as you want it answered or not.

Q. Partially, but not fully. Now, General, you believe that the men in the army, as well as the officers, feel that they are playing a football game or a game similar to a football game. They are campaigning to win?—A. Yes.

Q. They are out, not to get a decoration, but to win the game and, like the football boys, they want to get the colours at the end of the year, if possible.—A. Quite right.

Q. These fellows want to win and if possible they would be tickled to death to get an honour of some kind. Do you think it would help the morale of the army if they had something like that?—A. Definitely.

Q. That is my point. If it will help the morale of the army it is up to the committee to do something about it.

*By Hon. Mr. Bruce:*

Q. I take it from what you say, General Letson, that there is no means at the present time of recognizing the services of the higher officers?—A. That is correct.

Q. So that no matter how splendid their services have been, unless they happened to have done something such as would be described as gallantry in the face of the enemy, which would entitle them to the V.C. or some of those decorations, and that opportunity is not given, I take it, to many of the higher ranks?—A. No.

Q. Because they are not exposed in the same way as the men are under present conditions they suffer a handicap in consequence of the Nickle resolutions and the government action in relation thereto of not being able to receive a suitable award such as would be given them if they were serving, say, in the Australian army, the New Zealand army, or in the British army itself?—A. That is absolutely correct.

*By Mr. Gershaw:*

Q. May I put a question to you which I do not know is proper or not? How would the senior officers value, say, a title or decoration without the prefix "sir" in the order of chivalry; would they regard that as detracting from its value or its worth? What I mean is without the title or accolade?—A. That is a very difficult question for me to answer; that will depend entirely on the individual, what he might feel about it. The only parallel that I can think of is the question of foreign decorations, decorations given by the British to Americans in the last war. There were certain K.C.M.G.'s and possibly higher decorations given, and naturally when they returned to the United States they did not speak of themselves as "Sir So-and-so"; but that, I am sure—

*By the Chairman:*

Q. That was true of General Pershing?—A. Yes.

*By Mr. Gershaw:*

Q. Anything done to make it possible or likely for a senior officer to win, say, the highest of all awards, the V.C., would help. From the discussions last week it was brought out that it was almost impossible under present circumstances for an officer to win that award; that is, a higher officer could not take the risk of getting an award of that kind. Did you discuss that?—A. It would be very exceptional if he did. Normally the commander, the senior officer, is not in

close grip, hand to hand, if you like, with the enemy, and therefore it is unlikely that he should have the opportunity of winning the V.C., nor would it be desirable on the other hand that the man who is directing the campaign should be in the front line.

*By Hon. Mr. Bruce:*

Q. Would he be justified in exposing himself that way?—A. No, in my opinion he would not be justified.

Q. Would he not be subject to discipline if he so exposed himself or might he not be?—A. I would think so, yes.

*By Mr. Wright:*

Q. What would your reaction be to the suggestion that decorations should not be given because of rank alone? There are decorations only a major can win, say; there are decorations that only a general can win under the British regulations. What would the reaction of the army be to decorations of that type being available to lieutenants or any decoration that is available to a major be available also to a private?—A. Well, in the British army and in civilian life as well the highest award that the King can confer, namely, the V.C., and the George Cross are available to all ranks and all walks of life. The other orders of chivalry are graduated, the lower orders being given to the more junior officers and as those officers are promoted and normally they are promoted on account of their merit and good work, they then proceed along with their promotion to a higher rank in the order. It will be quite a change of policy if all grades of all orders were thrown open to all ranks in the army.

Q. What would be your reaction to such a suggestion?—A. I am only speaking personally, but I would say that it is not workable and would not be desirable. In all armies of the world, so far as I know, the highest orders of gallantry are open to everyone; in the French army and in the American army the congressional medal of honour, in the British army the V.C., are all open. That has been more or less standard practice, if you may use that word, for all armies of the world; but on the other hand the orders of chivalry both of monarchies and republics are graduated to correspond with the rank of the civilian or soldier or sailor or airman who receives that award.

Q. You referred to ranks of civilians; there are no ranks of civilians.—A. Possibly I should say "appointments," then; for example, a cabinet minister as opposed to an M.P.

Hon. Dr. BRUCE: A back bencher.

*By Mr. Wright:*

Q. Personally I cannot agree with the principle that any decoration should not be open to any man who is worthy of attaining it, whether he has already become a general or a major or a lieutenant or is still a private. There are only a certain number of men who can ever become generals in the army, and I think decorations are awards for service, and I think just as effective service can be rendered by a private or by a lieutenant or by a captain or a major as by a general. It is my personal opinion that awards should be open to all ranks. I think a great percentage of our army— —A. That has been recognized by the set-up in the army of medals and awards. First you have the campaign medals, which are issued to all who have served in a theatre of war; you next have the other medals which go up to the highest for gallantry plus those which are awarded for good service. Now, let us take, we will say, a lieutenant in the last war who might now be a field marshal in this war. He has the distinction of wearing an order of gallantry which he won in that rank in the last war which becomes evident to all who see him when he is a general in this war so that there are advantages to the system of graduation of awards to compare with the rank of the man who is winning them.

*By Mr. Turgeon:*

Q. General Letson, you mentioned General Pershing—I am asking purely for information—you said he could not use the title “Sir” when in the United States. Was he entitled to use that in England or was he given the award minus the title “Sir”?—A. I am not in a position to answer that offhand, but I would think that the British government would give him the title but I do not think as a United States citizen he is able to accept it. Whether they would give it to him or not I cannot answer that offhand.

Mr. BRUCE: I think perhaps I can help you there because I am of the opinion that he was given that honour without any restriction by the British government. If his own government imposed a restriction as to the use of that that is another matter, but while in England if anyone chose to address him as—I have forgotten his Christian name—

The CHAIRMAN: John.

Mr. BRUCE: Sir John Pershing—as a matter of fact—I think I have heard him addressed in that way. There can be no objection to it there. I would like to say a word by way of comment on the remarks made a few moments ago by Mr. Wright. While it is true that privates may do services that in the very nature of the service may show as great gallantry as anybody else in the army their opportunities for service are not of the same kind as those of a general leading the army, and even though they might be able to do service they have not the opportunity of doing it. I cannot see how you can place them in the same position in that regard as the leader of a division or an army corps or an army. By virtue of his position the commander of an army can do many things that a private has no chance of doing.

The WITNESS: And the general has the greater responsibility.

Mr. BRUCE: And he has the greater responsibility as well.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Wright, as a former soldier is it not your experience of the private who was decorated with the Military Medal or a non-commissioned officer with the D.C.M. he was extremely jealous of that honour and especially proud when he was promoted to officer rank?

Mr. WRIGHT: Yes, I think in most cases the medal meant more to him probably when he was promoted to officer rank than it did formerly.

The CHAIRMAN: With the consent of the committee Mr. Jackman would like to ask a question.

*By Mr. Jackman:*

Q. General Letson, as you probably know, any soldier of the last war who did not leave the shores of Canada whether it was because he was kept here for training others or because of old age, did not receive any general service medal at all. Have you come across many cases of men who were in that position and who are now serving with the colours again and who feel a certain amount of discrimination against them?—A. I know of many cases of men who fall in that category but as to the ones I have met I have never discussed with them the fact whether they felt they were discriminated against.

Q. They fell rather badly, I suppose, that they have nothing to show for their service in the last war?—A. That is right, yes. Service in the last war was rather slightly different from service in this war because greater numbers of men are serving in Canada now in this war than there were in the last war, relatively speaking.

Q. Would you think something should be done for them if they are now active in the service again? There is nothing to differentiate them from men who did not volunteer for active service in the last war.—A. Only the men in the last war that went from Canada—if they arrived in England they were given the general service medal. If they did not go to England they were not.

The CHAIRMAN: Any further questions? General Letson, the committee is very grateful for your presence and for your statement.

*By Mr. Bruce:*

Q. Just a moment; may we assume that speaking for the army you are of the opinion that honours and decorations should be available for the army without restriction?—A. Dr. Bruce, I would not like—I cannot, in fact, commit myself to make such a statement as that. I will go so far as to say that we feel that this distinction as between the armies of the British Commonwealth should be removed.

Q. It could only be removed by doing what I have suggested should be done.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you. We have the privilege of the presence of Commander Pennington of the Naval Service. Will you proceed in your own way, Commander Pennington, please?

Commander PENNINGTON, Called.

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman, since the last meeting I took the opportunity of requesting the Naval board for an expression of opinion so that I could speak with a little more authority than I would have been able to do had I been called on Friday. The Naval board authorized me to say to you, sir, that the Canadian Navy would welcome any proposal which would remove the discrimination that at present exists between the Royal Canadian Navy and the navies of the British Empire. At the present moment it is not possible to recognize any member of the Royal Canadian Navy except for gallantry and meritorious service performed in the presence of the enemy. That is to say, you have a particular case of meritorious service which is not performed in the presence of the enemy, and, with the sole exception of life saving, there is no way in which a member of the Royal Canadian Navy, either officer or rating, can be recognized, and the Naval board feel that such discrimination is undesirable and, to repeat, they would welcome any proposal which would remove such discrimination.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. In the British navy the C.B. and the K.C.B. and the K.C.M.G. or the C.M.G. may be awarded?—A. Yes.

Q. All orders of chivalry?—A. Yes, open to the Royal Navy and not open to the Royal Canadian Navy. I took the opportunity to turning up the Admiralty Fleet order which I thought might be of interest to the committee. This is a list of decorations which are available to the members of the Royal Navy. It starts off, naturally, with the Victoria Cross which may be awarded to officers and men of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines for most conspicuous bravery or some daring or pre-eminent act of valour or sacrifice or extreme devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy on land or at sea. That is available to the Canadian Navy.

The George Cross may be awarded to officers and men of the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines for outstanding gallantry and devotion to duty, whether on land or at sea, not in the presence of the enemy. That is available to the Royal Canadian Navy.

*By Mr. Fraser:*

Q. Mr. Chairman, may I ask a question in regard to that? I heard of one case where I believe this man received two awards of the George Cross. Is that right? Can they get two awards of the George Cross?—A. We have one case—we have no case in the navy of the George Cross—we have one case of the George Medal.

Q. The George Medal?—A. And the same officer received a bar to the George Medal about six weeks ago.

Q. That was Lieutenant Cook?—A. Lieutenant O'Hagen.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. That George Cross you are speaking of now is in the Royal Navy but I think you completed your statement by saying that it is available to the Royal Canadian Navy?—A. Yes.

Q. So is that not in conflict with your first statement? I notice that is awarded whether they are in contact with the enemy or not?—A. The George Cross, I think, sir—and perhaps Mr. Read can correct me if I am wrong—the George Cross was devised to take care of conditions where the Royal Navy or the Royal Canadian Navy would be doing very great acts of gallantry, and so on, during a blitz, an air raid, the removal of time bombs, the dismantling of mines washed up on shore, which are not technically in the face of the enemy. I venture to say if you are dismantling a new type bomb or a new type mine which has been washed up on shore if you tap it with a hammer or work on it with a screw driver it may blow you to hell and that is just as much an act of gallantry as if you were in a battle.

Q. So your first statement would be qualified to that extent?—A. Yes. Although definitely they say here not in the presence of the enemy it is in the presence of something horrible, a thing the enemy has left.

*By Mr. Turgeon:*

Q. That George award, as I understand you, may not be awarded for action actually in the presence of the enemy; is that the term as generally understood?—A. In the presence of the enemy I take it, sir, one of the other more suitable awards would be made.

*By Mr. Wright:*

Q. Have you any award in the navy to correspond with the D.S.O. and the M.C. in the army?—A. We have the D.S.O.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Is there an order of merit available for the naval officers?—A. It is not so listed, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand, Mr. Stirling, from you that the order of merit has been received for naval service?

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: Three admirals of the fleet have received it.

The WITNESS: I believe Admiral Jellicoe received the Order of Merit.

Mr. STIRLING: And Freemantle—I am not sure of the names, but I was looking up a fairly recent Whittaker the other day and it happened that in that list of about sixteen the first three were admirals, I think, admirals of the fleet.

The WITNESS: Now, we come to the awards of chivalry. Appointment as Companions of the Military Division of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, which is available to officers of the Royal Navy but not to the Royal Canadian Navy. Then there is the Order of the British Empire, similarly available to the Royal Navy but not to the Royal Canadian Navy. Distinguished Service Order is common to both. The Distinguished Service Cross is common to both. I think I would like to read the four lines the admiralty gives with regard to the Distinguished Service Order:—

Officers of the Royal Navy or of the Royal Marines may, in time of war, be appointed Companions of the Distinguished Service Order

for gallantry or devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy on land or at sea, which, though it may not be deemed to merit the Victory Cross, is yet of a very high order.

So that the wording of the admiralty would apply to any recommendation for the D.S.O. and would be where such duty has been performed in the presence of the enemy. I take it from that, sir, that no D.S.O. would be awarded to any member of the Royal Navy or Royal Canadian Navy as an order; it would be a decoration because it would have to be in the presence of the enemy. So that a senior officer who spends perhaps all his time at a shore base, not in the presence of the enemy would not be eligible under the terms of that ruling, for the D.S.O. because his duty would not be performed in the presence of the enemy unless the enemy invaded; because it has to be in the presence of the enemy on land or at sea.

*By Hon. Mr. Stirling:*

Q. How do you differentiate between the D.S.O. and the D.S.C.?—A. The D.S.O. is a much higher decoration. As a matter of fact, the only D.S.O. awarded in the Royal Canadian Navy is a Lieutenant Commander. That is the equivalent of a major.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. I notice in the order in which you have given us these—did you class the George Cross above the orders of chivalry?—A. I am reading that, sir, as the admiralty have tabulated them. Whether there is any significance in that order I would not know, sir.

We then come to the Albert Medals which are for gallantry in saving life at sea. I might interject a rather interesting little remark here, sir. When the *Fraser* was sunk two years ago there was a stoker who came up from the stoke hold after the ship had been very severely damaged and was just about to sink, and instead of saving himself he ran on the mess deck to see what he could do in the way of saving the lives of others. He actually was responsible for saving the life of the wireless operator who was jammed in his wireless cabin and was very severely injured, and without help could not have saved himself. His act was noticed. H.M.C.S. *Fraser* was then serving with the admiralty and the commanding officer brought the stoker's name to the attention of my lords with a recommendation for the Albert Medal for saving life at sea. The admiralty awarded this man the British Empire Medal. Had this matter passed through the channels of the Canadian government presumably this man, being a Canadian, would have been told he could not accept the medal as it is an order of the British Empire to which he would not be eligible. But the deed was done, and it was promulgated in the *British Gazette* so we have one rating who has the B.E.M., or did have, because he lost his life unfortunately a little while later in the sinking of the *Margaree*. There is a case in the Royal Canadian Navy where a rating got the Order of the British Empire but the way he got it was through being recommended for the Albert Medal. His deed was not of sufficiently high order, perhaps, for the high rank of the Albert Medal so they gave him a lower medal which was available to all the Royal Navy. The admiralty probably would not get the significance of the Nickle resolution and they would say, "Here is a fellow who deserves something; we will give him the British Empire Medal." The Royal Canadian Navy would not be in any position to do that. There are all kinds of acts of gallantry of that type which would merit one of the higher decorations.

*By Mr. Bruce:*

Q. I understood you to say that was the Order of the British Empire Medal?—A. Yes.

*By Mr. Gershaw:*

Q. Is that given posthumously?—A. This was actually awarded while he was alive.

Mr. GRAHAM: I presume, Dr. Bruce, what would happen there is you have created Companions of the Order of the British Empire and you give a medal to signify such a distinction. Is that not it?

The WITNESS: Yes, but the Royal Canadian Navy cannot do it.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: Is that so? The B.E.M. is what you might call fourth grade.

The WITNESS: Medals of the military division—

*By Mr. Bruce:*

Q. Is that medal under the Order of the British Empire?—A. May I read what the admiralty say about that one?

The Medal of the military division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire may be awarded to petty officers and men of the Royal Navy or to non-commissioned officers and men of the Royal Marines for gallantry and distinguished conduct not in the face of the enemy, whether on shore or at sea, or for meritorious service over a period either ashore or afloat.

The CHAIRMAN: The members of the committee will remember Mr. Read made that very clear the last time by discussing the situation in Egypt.

The WITNESS: I am really following on Mr. Read's memo.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. What is the basis of the award of the D.S.C.? Is that for gallantry in the face of the enemy?—A. Yes sir.

The Distinguished Service Cross may in time of war be awarded to officers of the Royal Navy of the rank of Commander and below and of equivalent ranks in the Royal Marines for meritorious or distinguished services before the enemy which may not be deemed to warrant the appointment of such officers to the Distinguished Service Order.

So that they rate the V.C. the D.S.O., and the D.S.C. Of those I have mentioned there, sir, there are only four that are available.

Q. The simple fact is, Commander Pennington, that under present conditions there is obviously discrimination against the men serving in the Canadian navy?—A. Oh, yes sir, and that is what the Naval board would like to see removed.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions?

*By Mr. Fraser:*

Q. I might ask the Commander the same question as I asked General Letson. Do you think it would help the morale of the navy if they had these distinctions and medals? Do you think it would pull into the navy perhaps men that are not looking for the money end of it but perhaps to do something for their country and get an honor?—A. I do not think it would help recruiting, if that is what you are asking me, because everybody who joins the navy joins for one idea, and that is to go to sea.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. In other words, enlistment is not motivated by the fact of decoration?  
—A. No, sir, I do not think that would enter into anybody's calculations. Speaking personally it never entered my head.

Mr. FRASER: I think you are right in that.

*By Mr. Turgeon:*

Q. But once in the service you would like to see the discrimination removed?—A. Certainly, sir, especially in the case of the Royal Canadian Navy who work very very closely with the admiralty on all kinds of operational and strategical matters. In fact, the King's Regulations and Instructions are our background bible, the admiralty instructions.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Commander, a Canadian serving in the Royal Navy cannot accept an order of chivalry?—A. No sir, most of the awards and honors that have been granted to the members of the Royal Canadian Navy have been in the first instance recommended by the Royal Naval commanding officers. As you know up to the last year the Royal Canadian Navy units were mostly operating on the other side so that the opportunity of winning decorations perhaps was a little greater than it is at the present moment when the majority of the Royal Canadian Navy is on this thankless task of convoys.

*By Mr. Fraser:*

Q. In regard to that again, Commander, in case of a Canadian boat being sunk perhaps in a convoy and the survivors being picked up—you have cases of where Canadian soldiers and officers have been put on to a British ship, have you not?—A. A British warship?

Q. Yes.—A. Yes.

Q. And perhaps they are on that warship for months?—A. They would not be for months, probably the next time they come to port.

Q. They are on there for some time?—A. Yes.

Q. Supposing then that the British warship went into action; British naval officers and men are entitled to decorations whereas the Canadians on the same ship are just out of luck?—A. They are entitled to decorations within these limitations.

Q. Within the limitations of this—A. Yes. In fact, for the awarding of say the British Empire Medal perhaps a stoker or victualling rating or writer or somebody who is down in the bowels of the ship on coaling work and maybe stuck to his job, as members of the Royal Navy they have rated the British Empire Medal or something like that and then the Canadian rating would not be entitled to that. Q. The Canadian working right alongside that same man is not entitled to that?—A. That could happen.

Q. Then there is a definite discrimination there?—A. Yes.

*By hon. Mr. Stirling:*

Q. Mr. Chairman, may I ask this witness whether he has any opinion to express with regard to the availability of the different grades to officers and other ratings?—A. Do you mean whether you could have one standard for all?

Q. I was not going as far as that, but the instance of a certain award or decoration being available to another rating, a higher degree of which would be available to a commissioned officer; take the case of a chief petty officer and a cadet—putting them at the widest—they might be engaged in the same act of very considerable gallantry and the awards for those gallant services would not be identical, would they?—A. If you go high enough they would be. As the

Adjutant General just said the V.C. is common to both. The George Cross is common to both.

Q. The D.S.C.?—A. The D.S.C. is an officers' award.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. Commander, I notice it is the admiralty board, I think you called it—A. The Naval board.

Q. Whom you are speaking for in giving the committee its opinion as well as your own. It is a general recommendation that we place officers and ratings of the Royal Canadian Navy on the same footing as the Royal Navy?—A. Quite right.

Q. That would carry with it, of course, the right to secure recognition that might entitle them to hereditary title?

The CHAIRMAN: No, that is beyond the terms of our reference. We cannot discuss that.

Mr. GRAHAM: I know we cannot discuss it.

The WITNESS: I will put it this way. That did come up in the Naval board, too.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. Here is my question. Putting it outside of the pale for the minute, at least, has the board any recommendation that would limit it to its practical possibilities of the moment?—A. The consensus of opinion of the Naval board yesterday morning was that hereditary titles were quite undesirable.

Q. Definitely out, so I take it what they really meant was equality with that limitation?—A. Yes.

Mr. TURGEON: If I may say this, Mr. Chairman, I imagine that the Naval board, knowing that Commander Pennington was appearing before this particular committee, would not be contemplating any recommendation beyond the terms of our reference that is beyond our power to discuss the items. I would take it for granted.—A. That is quite so, sir. As a matter of fact, all I asked the Naval board was for an opinion on the particular question of equality between the navies of the commonwealth.

The CHAIRMAN: As General Letson pointed out the highest grade of order of chivalry may be awarded without carrying a title as was done in the case of General Pershing so we have an opportunity to discuss that.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. I am not discussing the reference. I am just getting the true interpretation of the board, whose recommendations are certainly not covered by our reference.—A. No. That point was discussed informally by the members of the board, and I must confess in a rather jocular manner. They just said, "Well, we are not out to get hereditary titles for the navy."

*By Mr. Bruce:*

Q. I should like to put one further question to Commander Pennington. Is it fair to assume that the fact that there is discrimination, such as I think we all agree there is, is causing a certain dissatisfaction amongst the personnel of the navy?—A. It may be does. But these things do not come to a head. I mean, we do not get any correspondence from the commands saying that there is a seething of indignation amongst the ratings at Halifax because we cannot get the B.E.M. But I think if it was put to an average cross-section of the navy for an opinion, you would find that the opinion, from the lower deck right all the way up, would coincide practically with the opinion of the Naval board. It seems only reasonable to assume that.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. Those who deserve those decorations, I am glad to hear, are not those of the type who give much voice to their opinion with regard to that.—A. That is so. I must confess that the navy is quite hardboiled in the manner in which it makes its recommendations for awards. They do not treat them cheaply. As a matter of fact, I happen to be secretary of the Naval Local Awards and Honours Committee, which is a small body of senior officers who sift the recommendations that come in from the commanding officers. When we are in any doubt whatsoever as to whether a recommendation should go any further and be placed before the ministry for submission to council, we will make a signal to the Admiralty and we will say to the Admiralty, "What would you do in a case like this because you have had lots of experience?" We have had cases of attacks on submarines where the evidence would make the average layman assume that that was the end of that U-boat. The Admiralty, with their vast experience, and their far-reaching intelligence resources, are able to determine with some degree of certainty whether that particular U-boat was destroyed, severely damaged or merely damaged, and they will come back and say, "We would not recommend any awards in this particular case. What we would suggest is that you make mention in despatches instead of the D.S.C. because the action was probably brilliantly conceived and carried out but there is no definite evidence of the destruction of the U-boat."

Q. I accept your statement in its entirety because I think it coincides with my own information. I compliment you on that. I am a little surprised, in view of that, that in the case you cited, where the Albert medal was recommended, the British authorities did not carry out your recommendations on it, knowing how careful you were.—A. It was not a recommendation by the naval service headquarters at Ottawa. It was merely a recommendation of the man's commanding officer who, at that time, was serving under the Admiralty and making his report direct to the Admiralty and sending us a copy.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. It is a fact that pride in the award of an honour to a member of a ship's crew or unit is shared in by all members of that unit or ship?—A. It certainly is. Perhaps I can illustrate that point. It follows on one of these cases I have just mentioned, where the naval board was in a little doubt as to whether awards should be recommended in this particular case. They referred it to the Admiralty and the Admiralty came back and said, "In this case we would not recommend any award." There was no question that the particular action had been very brilliantly carried out and did credit to one of our new corvettes with a comparatively green crew. I made the recommendation to the Honours and Awards Committee that it might be a nice gesture to write to the three officers and five ratings who had been singled out for distinction and just say, "I am commanded by my Lord Commissioners" and so on to say that you did darn good work; and give them a piece of paper they could keep. The answer I got, in my ignorance, was that these decorations are made to representatives of a ship working as a unit and that if any letter went out, it should go to the commanding officer of the ship to be put up on the notice board or preserved in the archives of that particular vessel for all time and not go to the individual officers or ratings where sixty or seventy of them all shared in that particular action doing their work.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. They recognize the ship as a unit?—A. Yes.  
Q. The ship's crew?—A. Yes.

*By Hon. Mr. Stirling:*

Q. In convoy work, can you give any information with regard to the difficulty of deciding whether such and such an act of gallantry was in the presence of the enemy or not? There may have been a submarine in the offing or surface craft somewhere near.—A. I think, generally speaking, any act of gallantry performed by any of the Royal Canadian Navy in the north Atlantic can be considered within the phraseology of being in the presence of the enemy.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions?

*By Mr. Fraser:*

Q. I should like to ask this question. If an officer was in the Mediterranean with a Canadian boat and received the George Medal, that might be published in the paper in Canada, but his next kin is not notified of that at all. Is that right?—A. The usual routine there is that we would receive a signal from the Admiralty stating that the officer or rating concerned had been awarded that particular decoration, publication in gazette issue dated so and so. Until that appears in the gazette in England and word is received from the High Commissioner, we would not make that public.

Q. You would not make it public?—A. No.

Q. I have a case of this lady who received a letter from her son a month after it was awarded, and she just had that letter. There was nothing in the paper. Then in the Canadian papers they had it in about a month after that, but no recognition from the department here.—A. That might be the answer, because it would be gazetted in the British gazette, not in the Canadian gazette.

Q. Not in the Canadian gazette at all?—A. No. I have a list here, without mentioning names: I have nine cases here which have not been gazetted. So far as we are concerned, we are not making them public until they are, and advice has been received from the Admiralty that these awards are pending or have been granted.

Q. What I am getting at is that the dependants here, in the case of the wife or mother, may want to do a little what you might call advertising that their son or husband got the medal, but they have only got their son's or husband's word for it. Then they write in to their member or somebody else asking if they can find out anything about it.—A. As a matter of fact, it is very seldom, unless we ask for it, that we get the citation at all from the other side. If it is the George Medal, or the George Cross where the Admiralty promulgated in the Admiralty Fleet Order the reasons for granting such award, unless we ask for the reasons, we do not get them.

Q. Do you not think that the department here should have that?

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid we are getting off the beam a little bit.

The WITNESS: Possibly so. As a matter of fact, it is quite a point and we might tidy that up.

Mr. FRASER: I think it should be.

The WITNESS: When we get any decorations, it takes a few months.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions?

*By Hon. Mr. Stirling:*

Q. I have one more. Does the Royal Canadian Navy take any notice of gallantry on the part of members of the Mercantile Marine?—A. The Royal Canadian Navy? No, because there is no way in which we can do it. I will have to get this bible again. For the Merchant Navy, under the tabulation of decorations which are available to the various personnel there is: "A—

Gallantry and Distinguished Conduct in the face of the enemy when operating with or under the orders of the Royal Navy?" So that the personnel of a fleet oiler, supply ship or collier working under the operation of the Royal Canadian Navy would be entitled to the Victoria Cross, the Distinguished Service Cross, the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal and the Distinguished Service Medal. It makes it that to all intents and purposes they are treated as Royal Naval Ratings.

Q. Would that apply to a seaman on a ship being convoyed?—A. No, because that would not be operating on or under the orders of the Royal Navy. I would say no. That is a personal opinion there.

Q. There is no way to give a recommendation for gallantry on a ship being convoyed by a corvette?—A. Yes, there is. We will come to the next one: "B—Gallantry and Distinguished Conduct in defence of ships or after damage caused by enemy action or in rescue work: The George Cross, The Orders of the British Empire (C.B.E., C.B.E., M.B.E., D.E.M.) and the George Medal." There is only the George Cross and the George Medal which would be available to the Canadian merchant man. So we have discrimination there between the two merchant services—as I think was brought out at the last meeting—in that whereas a British merchant man can be, and I think has been, awarded Orders of the British Empire for gallantry and distinguished conduct in the defence of ships or after damage caused by enemy action, the Canadian merchant man is discriminated against.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions? If not, I would say to Commander Pennington that we appreciate his attendance very much and thank him for it.

We have the privilege of the presence of Wing Commander MacLean of the Royal Canadian Air Force, whom I will now call upon.

Wing Commander A. C. H. MacLEAN, called.

The CHAIRMAN: Proceed in your own way, please, Wing Commander MacLean.

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman, I am the official representative of the Royal Canadian Air Force. But I happen to belong to the R.A.F. I am on loan out here and my term of loan is finished this morning.

The CHAIRMAN: We are very fortunate, then.

The WITNESS: So as an official representative I must be disinterested; but as a member of the R.A.F. and also as a member of the British Empire, if you care to take off the gloves and play it with the gloves off I will be very glad to let you have it.

The CHAIRMAN: You may remove the gloves, sir.

The WITNESS: Well, I think it is time, because the R.A.F. are very proud of their younger brother the Royal Canadian Air Force. Mr. Head in his opening remarks at the last meeting, cited cases. I was in the case. Before I came here I was staff officer of No. 11 fighter group, and No. 11 group was No. 1 Canadian fighter squadron, on the same aerodrome with No. 1 R.A.F. fighter squadron and No. 303 Polish. In the Battle of Britain these three squadrons mopped up 110 Huns in eleven days, and the Canadians had their share.

By Mr. Bruce:

Q. You mean Hun ships or machines?—A. Hun planes, down on the front and decorations for McNab and McCall were awarded there—D.F.C.'s to both of them. At the end of the operation a staff officer came and calling off the recommendations for the ground crew who had done exceptional service. They were submitted with the three squadrons, but as No. 1 fighter Canadian was

banned for recognition, the R.A.F. and the Polish personnel got recognition and the Canadian boys got nothing. And believe me, the Canadian government got no marks on their aerodrome. There was very bitter feeling. They had done the same stuff, the boys had fought well. They had been bombed heavily several times and there was not a damn award that came to any Canadian ground crew, and there were very bitter feelings amongst the R.A.F. We felt that these grand boys from Canada were being discriminated against. I am afraid I came out to Canada with that in my mind. When the C.A.F. did me the honour of putting me in charge of Honours and Awards in the Royal Canadian Air Force, I seized it with both hands. I said, "It is time now. After all, if they do not like me, they can only send me home, and I can only speak out", and I think what is wanted is speaking out, sir. It is the right of a soldier, and by that I mean also sailors and airmen, to get a medal. Napoleon established it. It cost him fifteen cents and he put it on the breast of a soldier and that was more to a soldier than a grant of five thousand francs.

Some Hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

The WITNESS: And every young soldier, sailor or airman wants a medal; and if you say he doesn't, you just do not know what you are talking about. I joined my regiment in 1903 in the South African War and I just missed going to South Africa by six weeks. I can remember for ten years looking at my pals who had the South African ribbon, and I would have given my soul for one; and I do not think that I am unique.

It is the right of the soldier, sailor and airman to be decorated. He wants a bit of ribbon on his breast. His pals see it. His girl sees it, and that is—

The CHAIRMAN: And sometimes it is not noticed at all.

The WITNESS: Yes, you are right, sir. Therefore, it gives me great pleasure officially and privately to be here and express my views.

Hon. Mr. BRUCE: We are very glad to have them.

The WITNESS: I think, sir, it is time, because we do feel—I am talking for the R.A.F.—we do feel terribly that our gallant Canadian boys are being discriminated against. In actual fighting decorations, Canadian decorations, the Canadians in the R.A.F. have got 125 decorations. These include the D.S.O., the D.F.C., the D.F.M., and the A.F.C. The Royal Canadian Air Force in England only got 60 decorations for fighting and the Royal Canadian Air Force serving in Canada have got 26 decorations—the A.F.C., the D.F.C., and the B.E.M.—which is the decoration of the Order of Chivalry of the British Empire. Mr. John Reid made that point. For some unknown reason you have allowed another rank, a flight sergeant and downwards through your similar ratings in the army and the navy—you have allowed them to take the Order of Chivalry and you have debarred the officers; and again we have that feeling amongst other ranks, we say our officers are discriminated against, and they don't like it. Our officers have been getting the feeling that our heads are being discriminated against. Why should not Breadner get the K.C.B.; his opposite member got it two years ago? Why should not the chiefs of the Navy, the Army and the Air Force be decorated in a suitable way? My thought is—and this is a private view on that, sir—that you are voluntarily putting the Canadian boys in the same category as the "untouchables"; and if you have been in India you know that that is a fairly strong word. You are not allowing your boys to take a ribbon. That, as I say, is my private opinion, sir; and I think it is a great shame.

Now, with regard to the remarks of the Adjutant General, we fully endorse his remarks from the Air point of view, except for one little point about which I would like to speak to you. He said that the allocation of awards in Canada was not so much applied to the Royal Canadian Air Force. That is true. We have given for devotion to duty and conspicuous flying the awards which are

allowed; 29 of them were given last Birthday, some six weeks ago, and they were the Air Force Cross and the Air Force Medal. The training plan that Canada is working is just about 60 per cent of the credit of the Royal Air Force. That whole thing is a wonderful show, both as it relates to the R.A.F. and the R.C.A.F. We never knew it could be possible. Therefore, we said, we will decorate the boys who are doing this in Canada; and their tails have gone right up and they are scratching their ears now. They are pleased, all ranks. We got that across. But I want to tell you that in the Air Force we do not consider it is the pilot's job only, it is a team affair; and it takes anything from 12 to 15 men to put an aircraft into the air. We do not think the pilot is the be all and end all, he is just one of that fifteen. Practically all the members of that crew, with the exception of the bombers, are crown staff, and they are not allowed by Canadian orders at the moment to get any recognition because they cannot get orders suitable to their rank. True, the British Empire medal is given. But the actual air crew in the bomber, of course, comes under the category of fighting decorations. You see, you cannot put an aircraft into the air by simply snapping your fingers; you have to have it serviced, and you have fitters, riggers, wireless, electricians, armourers, bombers—in fact, the team is ten roughly. We recognized that in the Battle of Britain in the Royal Air Force, and every month the squadrons in the fighting line make one submission for decorations for other ranks; but I am afraid No. 1 Fighter Canadian Squadron does not get anything because they are Canadians. So, therefore, gentlemen, the picture that I am trying to paint is a very gloomy one.

The CHAIRMAN: You mean, at the moment?

The WITNESS: At the moment, sir.

Hon. Mr. BRUCE: We have hopes.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

The WITNESS: There was a suggestion made, sir, about those Canadians who came forward in the last war and joined the services but didn't get overseas. It was also said that there was not very much desire to get recognition. Now, we find that not to be the case. In the Air Force we have a lot of officers and we have a lot of men who are serving for a second time in Canada. In the last war, through no fault of their own, they did not cross the Atlantic, and you had to take that step before you got the General Service Medal. And there is a very definite feeling that this may happen again. In the United States they take a slightly different outlook from the one we take. They give medals before the war is won; we give them after it. And I wonder whether we cannot learn something from the United States. Anybody in the service in the United States before Pearl Harbour who was in the services got a ribbon, and he put it up with pride. Anybody in the States last war who did not get across the sea also got a ribbon. None of our boys did. It is a pity. We should go back and we should give the boys who did not cross the Atlantic last war a ribbon. I took the liberty six months ago of designing one so that we would be ready; and in this war I think we should get right on to it—if you join up and it is not your luck to go overseas. We took a census the other day in the Air Force and 92 per cent are panting to go overseas; 88 per cent are panting to be air crew; therefore, the spirit is there. And, as for the women, they all want to go overseas.

I think that is all, sir.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions?

Hon. Mr. BRUCE: I think, Mr. Chairman, we should move a vote of thanks for the frankness with which the Commander has expressed his views. It should be very helpful to us as a committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you defer that to the end of the meeting, please? We will have the questions.

*By Hon. Mr. Stirling:*

Q. Has the witness, Mr. Chairman, anything to express with regard to the grade which might be awarded to a commissioned rank and those below commissioned rank? If we were to return to acquiescence entirely in the method of the United Kingdom, would that in itself fill the bill? We have had the question arising of a sergeant pilot doing practically the same work as a pilot officer; has the witness any opinion to express with regard to the distinction that is entailed in that?—A. I do not think there is any difficulty at all. It is a recognized thing that the Distinguished Flying Cross is for the commissioned ranks. If he is a pilot officer he gets the D.F.C.; and if the pilot happens to be a sergeant he gets the D.F.M.; he knows that his decoration will be the Distinguished Flying Medal, there is no fooling about it. A very large number of the possessors of the Distinguished Flying Medal get commissions and then they go up and get the D.F.C.; and it is a very fine start on your left chest to have the D.F.C. and the D.F.M. Actually a number of Canadian officers have got these three—including the D.S.O. When he goes up he gets the medal of the higher grade—he has the D.F.M. and then he gets the D.F.C. and the D.S.O. we will say; and it is a very nice thing for him to have the D.F.M. Those have been the grades and they have been in existence for the last twenty-five years and I have never heard one single complaint.

*By Mr. Gershaw:*

Q. Regarding the giving of ribbons to those who did not succeed in getting overseas; where would you draw the line? Would you include all the men who happened to be wearing the uniform? Would you make any distinction between officers and men?—A. We do not draw any distinction between officers and men; we are all in the same work, all part of the team. Most of our clerical people want to fly but they can't because they wear spectacles or the category is too low. There is no distinction. We are all in this war together.

*By Mr. Jackson:*

Q. If I might say a word, Mr. Chairman, I am one of those who was rather young in the last war, but at seventeen I was in the Air Force and I would state that I never got outside of Canada with a result that I received no general service award. But the question has been brought up, and it is one which I have been thinking a good deal about, because I think the award of such a medal would be a good thing. I might point out that we have a precedent for that in connection with the Canada Medal of 1866-70 which was awarded to the men who helped to thrash Colonel O'Neil and his band of Fenians; and I think that medal was only struck off after the Saskatchewan Medal which was given subsequent to the Riel rebellion. I have at hand in a book which I have here something about that. It says:—

The Canada Medal of 1866-70 was struck thirty years after it had been won and when the majority of those who had fought for it were either dead or lost to the authorities. Consequently, comparatively few pieces reached the men who had a right to them. It is quite certain that this medal would have never been issued had not a piece been struck for Riel's rebellion in 1885. Between the appearance of the latter and the year 1899, when the 1866-70 award came into existence, there were constant references in the Colonial press to the need for making the award, and it was due to agitation, alone, that the men who thrashed Colonel O'Neil and his band of Fenians were ever properly acknowledged.

I might also point out in that regard that the first general service medal issued by the British government was the one for Waterloo, but its award was only made after the Peninsula war and it bore the effigy of Queen Victoria who of course was not on the throne at the time of the fighting of the Peninsular wars. Therefore, there is a very good precedent for recognizing those who may, in the opinion of the government, be entitled to some recognition, even though the date almost is past.

The CHAIRMAN: Dr. Bruce moves and Mr. Graham seconds—

Hon. Mr. BRUCE: May I just add to that motion, "Not only for the frankness with which he has spoken to us today, but also for the constructive suggestions which he has just made."

Mr. GRAHAM: While I would not wish to detract from our appreciation of the frankness of the witness I doubt that it is a wise motion in view of our not recognizing the other witnesses.

The CHAIRMAN: I understood the motion included all the others.

Hon. Mr. BRUCE: I do not wish to make any invidious distinction. I make the motion simply because of the fact that Wing Commander MacLean has now finished his work in Canada and is returning to the Old Country.

The CHAIRMAN: The motion, as I understand it, is that the committee express its sincere thanks to General Letson, Commander Pennington and Wing Commander MacLean for their presence here today and their enlightening information and statements.

Motion agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Read, have you any suggestions as to any further evidence?

Mr. READ: Mr. Coleman is here.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Coleman, would you be available on Thursday?

Mr. COLEMAN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: I think we had better adjourn now, but before the committee adjourns I should like to expedite matters and I think we should ask the committee to give me authority to appoint a small committee to draw up a tentative report as a basis for discussion, not necessarily a final report. Perhaps the committee does not wish to do that now?

Mr. TURGEON: I would move the committee give you such authority to name a committee, of such size and such members as you may think wise, to prepare a draft report for study by the committee itself.

The CHAIRMAN: As a basis for discussion.

Mr. FRASER: I second the motion.

Motion agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now adjourn.

Mr. FRASER: There is likelihood of the house sitting tomorrow morning?

The CHAIRMAN: May we adjourn to the call of the chair?

The Committee adjourned at 1 o'clock to meet at the call of the chair.



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SESSION 1942

HOUSE OF COMMONS

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE

ON

# (HONOURS AND DECORATIONS

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MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE

No. 4

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THURSDAY, JULY 16, 1942

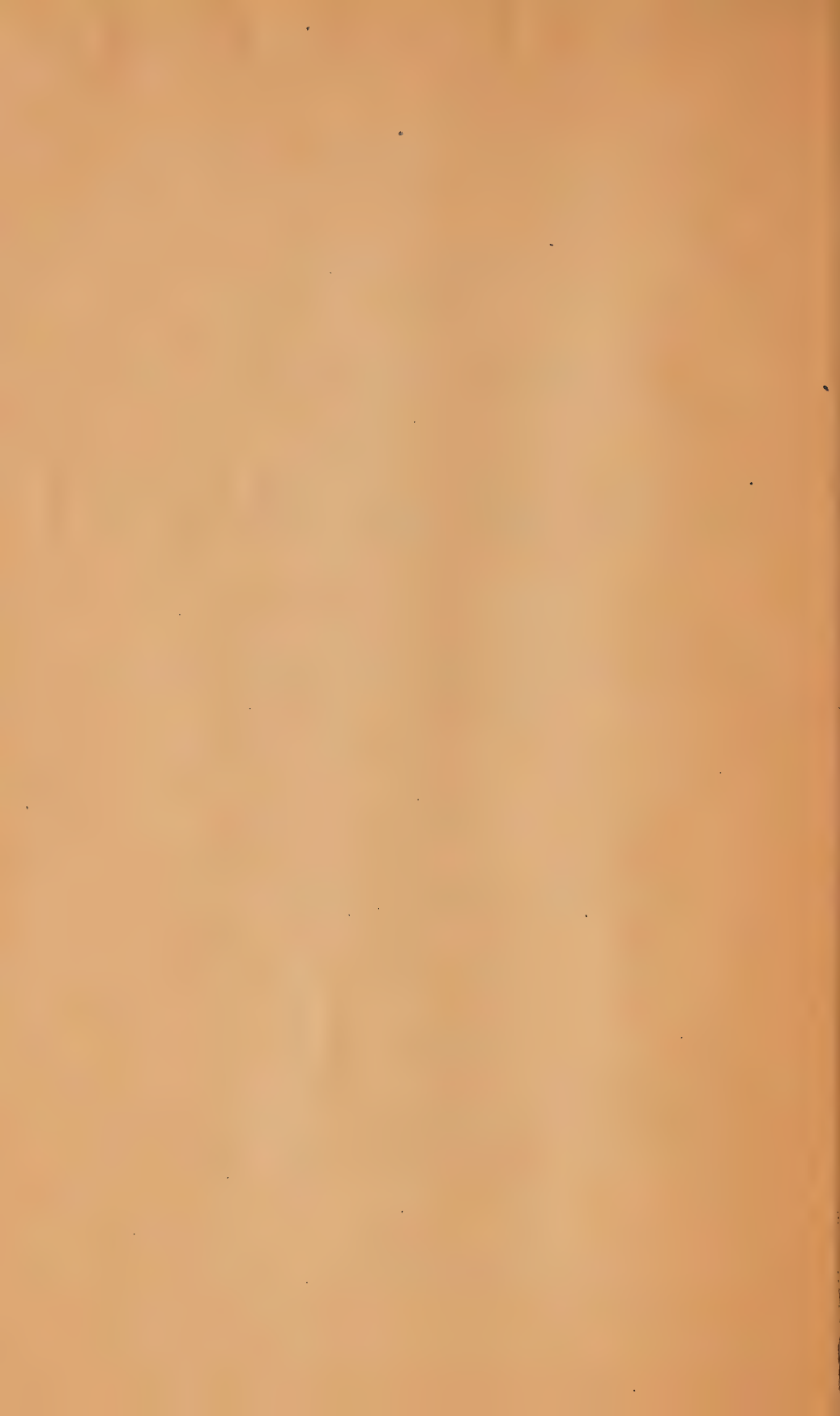
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## WITNESSES:

Mr. Philip Konowal, V.C.

Mr. E. H. Coleman, K.C., Under Secretary of State.

Mr. John E. Read, K.C., Legal Adviser, Department of External Affairs.



## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, July 16, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations met this day at 11.00 a.m. Hon. Cyrus Macmillan, the Chairman, presided.

The following members were present: Messrs. Fraser (*Peterborough West*), Gershaw, Graham, Hill, Kinley, Macmillan, Marshall, McCuaig, Turgeon, Weir, Wood and Wright.—12.

Mr. J. F. Pouliot, with leave, addressed the Committee with reference to Mr. Philip Konowal, V.C.

Mr. Philip Konowal, V.C., was called, examined, and retired.

Mr. E. H. Coleman, K.C., Under Secretary of State, was called, examined, and retired.

Mr. John E. Read, K.C., Legal Adviser, Department of External Affairs, was recalled, further examined, and retired.

The Chairman stated that Dr. Bruce desired to make a brief statement to the Committee. It was agreed that Dr. Bruce be requested to hand to the Chairman a written representation, which, with the approval of the Chairman, should be included in the evidence.

The Committee adjourned at 12.15 p.m. to meet again at the call of the Chair.

J. P. DOYLE,  
*Clerk of the Committee.*



## MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS, ROOM 268,

July 16, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations met this day at 11 o'clock a.m. The Chairman, Hon. Cyrus Macmillan, presided.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. POULIOT: Mr. Chairman—

The CHAIRMAN: Just a minute, please. With the consent of the committee, Mr. Pouliot wishes to ask a question. Proceed, Mr. Pouliot.

Mr. POULIOT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen. I will not take much of your time. I have only one question to ask you: Are you aware that besides Major Gregg who was awarded the Victoria Cross during the last war, there is in this building another gentleman, another soldier, who was awarded the same decoration for mopping up and killing sixteen Germans with his bayonet. Now that man has a mop in his hand and is employed as a temporary on the char staff. I submit that matter to you. I have in my hand a book compiled by the Canadian War Records Office entitled "Thirty Canadian V.C.'s" from April, 1915, to March, 1918. The name of this man and his story are right here at pages 58, 59 and 60 of the book. His name is Philip Konowal. He was badly wounded. If you would like to see him, I can find him right along in the corridor.

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, Mr. Pouliot, that is not within the terms of our reference. I suppose what you mean is that the decoration should carry with it at least a certain amount of care on the part of the nation for the recipient of the honour. Is that right?

Mr. POULIOT: Yes, Mr. Chairman, you are a mind reader. I would substitute the words "due recognition" for the word "character". I believe those who have been awarded the highest decoration in the British Empire should be well cared for by the state as a recognition of what they have done in the army.

The CHAIRMAN: The soldier to whom you refer was awarded the Victoria Cross?

Mr. POULIOT: Yes. Would you like me to bring him here?

The CHAIRMAN: Would the committee like to see the soldier?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well.

Mr. WEIR: He was awarded the Victoria Cross, you say?

Mr. POULIOT: Yes. If you will excuse me for just a minute, I will get him.

Mr. PHILIP KONOWAL, V.C., called:

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Good morning, Mr. Konowal. Will you come up here, please. You were awarded the Victoria Cross, were you not?—A. Yes.

Q. As a result of what battle?—A. In Hill 70.

Q. August 15, 1917?—A. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions any member of the committee would like to ask?

*By Mr. Wright:*

Q. How long have you been employed on the staff here?—A. Seven years.

*By Mr. Kinley:*

Q. Do you get a pension?—A. I get \$15.

Q. A month?—A. Yes.

Mr. KINLEY: What is your trade or calling?

*By the Chairman:*

Q. What did you do before you got on here?—A. Well, I was working at the Ottawa Electric Company. I had just come from Russia at that time before the war. I came in 1913 and the war started in 1914. I was working for the Eddy Company out in the bush.

Q. Any of us who were at Hill 70, I think, remember your citation. I am not going to detail again the deeds of valour for which you got this award, but they were very conspicuous deeds of bravery, as I remember them, at that time. You were very severely wounded?—A. Yes. I got hit here by a sniper, and it came out here in my neck.

Q. Have you made any effort to obtain other employment than the employment you now have?—A. Yes. I worked in Argyle House for an officer in the Canadian Army who looked after soldiers of Russian origin who belonged to the Canadian Army.

Q. You went to Argyle House and worked there?—A. Yes, for an officer looking after Russian-Canadian soldiers.

Q. Looking after Canadian soldiers?—A. Looking after pensions, wives and children. General Turner sent me down to Siberia as an interpreter.

Q. What is your mother tongue? What is your language?—A. Russian.

Q. As I recall it, you captured a machine gun nest, did you not?—A. I killed sixteen Germans with a bayonet and captured one machine gun and destroyed one gun.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions?

Mr. KINLEY: Has he suffered poverty since the last war?

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Have you suffered privation since the last war?—A. I got a pain here all the time.

Q. Have you been hungry since the last war?

*By Mr. Kinley:*

Q. Were you out of a job since the last war?—A. I was eleven years in hospital after the war. They put me in the hospital for the insane because I had a nervous breakdown. I was looking after veterans for eleven years. As soon as I came out Colonel Street, the manager of the Ottawa Electric, gave me a job there. After another manager came they discharged so many people and discharged me at the same time. Then I was out of a job three years, around here and there. Then I got this job through Major Gregg and General Winter. They gave me this job.

The CHAIRMAN: We are very glad to see you, and the committee will take note of your case.

The WITNESS: Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN: We have present this morning Mr. E. H. Coleman who will make a statement to the committee

Mr. E. H. COLEMAN, Under-Secretary of State, called:

The CHAIRMAN: Will you proceed in your own way, Mr. Coleman.

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, at the earlier sittings you have heard representatives of the armed services. I happen to represent or be named to the interdepartmental committee from the civilian aspect. I think perhaps it may be of interest if I state to the committee that at the moment there are available for certain civilians two medals. One is the Imperial Service Medal. The Imperial Service Order was established in 1902 and it provides for two forms of recognition. It provides for Companions of the Order, limited in number, who are members of the civil service and who have served for twenty-five years. There are qualifications to that in respect to India, Burma and tropical countries where the period is under twenty-five years, but they are not important here. Then the order or companionship is available to members of the administrative or clerical branches of the civil service. It is a very coveted recognition. On the construction which was put on the Nickle resolution, no companion or no awards of companionships were made until 1934 or 1935, when, I think, there were two or three. On the other hand, the Imperial Service Medal is available for civil servants of twenty-five years' service, for faithful service. But it is restricted to employees whose work involved manual labour, and the awards of this medal have been made, so far as I can ascertain, from 1919 on.

I think one of the members of the committee mentioned the other day—you will recall, perhaps—letter carriers and railway employees on the government railways, and a number of other cases. Now, on the interpretation set upon the regulations, from the logical point of view, it would seem that the companionship was treated differently from the manner in which the medal was treated; and if you were to ask me to explain on any logical grounds why that was done, I could not, because I do not know. These medals, as I say, are very highly cherished by the recipients. The other medal is the King's Police and Fire Service Medal for members of the Canadian police and fire services; that goes for gallantry to members of recognized police forces and fire brigades in Canada. It was reconstituted in 1938 and the regulations were made and were published in the *Canada Gazette*. Very briefly, they are these: each application for an award of the medal shall be accompanied (a) in the case of a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police by a certificate signed by the Commissioner and approved by the minister in control of the service; and in the case of a member of a police service of any province of Canada by a certificate signed by the chief officer of the police service and approved by the minister in control of such service; and in the case of a member of a police or fire service of a municipality in Canada by a certificate signed by the chief of the police force or fire brigade and approved by the executive council of the municipality; and then, in the case of a member of a police or fire service not included within any of the foregoing categories, by a certificate signed by the chief officer of such service.

The number of the awards is limited. I think there were about five in 1939, and three or four last year. Recommendations are forwarded in October of each year and I think we have already on our files recommendations respecting four or five policemen or firemen in Canada.

By Mr. McCuaig:

Q. Is this for long service or conspicuous service?—A. Gallantry—for acts of conspicuous bravery or skill, of conspicuous devotion to duty.

Q. It is not a long service medal?—A. No.

Now, these two medals, the Imperial Service Medal and the King's Police Medal, which I have mentioned, are the only two decorations or medals available for civilians other than the George Medal.

Q. Can these medals be awarded posthumously?—A. Yes. The attention of the committee has necessarily been directed to the war, and even in respect to that I think we are all conscious of the fact that we are all in this war to a greater degree than any other war in history, and many deeds of gallantry are performed by members of the civilian population. It is very hard to enumerate the categories, but there are conspicuously the merchant seamen, the workers in the munitions plants and there are the men and women who have, under very trying and dangerous conditions, remained at their posts on duty. In respect to them, I think my brief, if I may use such a term, is very thoroughly set out in a letter from the High Commissioner, Mr. Massey, which you already have before you. Then, of course, there is the much wider question of recognition of distinguished service by civilians which may not involve physical bravery or gallantry. There are, as I think we all know, many citizens of Canada who are performing public service that is very important and of a high order. Then, speaking of gallantry, there are of course many cases of civilians who perform very gallant deeds which have no relation directly to the war, and at the moment there is no fitting recognition as far as I am aware. I brought from my desk the account of a man in a Canadian city who in June of this year was lying on his back in a hospital having received very severe burns in January—as a matter of fact, it was on the 15th of January, 1942. His clothes were literally burned off his back, he was terribly burned and seriously injured—as the letter says, he chose not to disregard the safety of the child by tossing it to the ground and jumping himself.

I do not know that there is anything I can add. You have had a very comprehensive review from Mr. Read at the opening of your hearing with respect to the armed services. If any members of the committee think I can assist in any way by answering questions I will be happy to do so.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Are there any questions?

*By Mr. Gershaw:*

Q. I am not sure that I got exactly what Mr. Coleman said regarding these civilian medals; they are Imperial orders; does the recommendation go through the usual channels until it reaches His Majesty, and are they then granted by the King?—A. Yes.

*By Mr. Kinley:*

Q. Is it not a fact that the Governor General is delegated to act for His Majesty the King in Canada in the giving of awards?—A. These recommendations go direct to London.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. Would you agree with me that there are two distinct branches of this matter; that is the one of soldiers or service personnel and the other recognition of civilian service? Will you also agree that there is a military problem and that it is the urgent one; that it is more urgent than dealing with civilians?—A. I rather fancy that they both have come up by reason of the war.

Q. That is what I mean, and I just wanted to get your views.—A. There are, you will realize, as I have said, civilians who are engaged in very important war work, such as the merchant seamen.

Q. I think, as you suggested there, that we are almost all agreed to the need of there being adequate recognition for civilians, and I can see the need of a considerable study and consideration of the civilian question; what I wanted to get at really was this, is there not a greater need and a greater urgency with respect to military awards, and should there not be a division of the problem?—A. I would divide the civilian problem in two, if you wish; I think there is an urgent problem in connection with certain categories of civilians.

Q. Perhaps you are right.—A. Just as much as the man who wears the uniform. There are the merchant seamen, the munitions workers and different types—

The CHAIRMAN: And the scientific workers.

The WITNESS: Yes, and the scientific workers, as suggested.

*By Mr. McCuaig:*

Q. In recognizing civilians what yardstick do you use in making the awards; say, with respect to the policemen and firemen? Would an act be considered bravery when the person concerned might only be doing what every citizen is obligated as a citizen to do? In a case like that, where he does not do anything more than you would expect any citizen to do, would he in such a case be entitled to a decoration?—A. I would say that the matter would have to be sifted. It is almost impossible to prescribe in language a standard. I think each case would have to be considered on its merits.

The CHAIRMAN: I suppose for the soldier who performs an act of great gallantry, he is really only doing what is expected of him.

The WITNESS: Yes, he is just doing what is expected of him.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, what an ordinary soldier is expected to do.

Mr. John READ: I think I might give some information on the question you raise. In England during the last three years they have had a big problem of civilians in the war and they have worked out a system covering all the types of voluntary agencies upon whom Great Britain confers or imposes honours by reason of war activities, such as the A.R.P. worker, the voluntary fireman, the voluntary policeman and the different divisions of the Red Cross agents; and the whole scheme is worked out for that part of the civilian population almost as though they were part of the army with respect to recommendations and so on.

Mr. GRAHAM: I have no doubt that you have already given this evidence, but in England why did they do that, and how did they do it? How do they treat the merchant seamen, for instance?

Mr. READ: Well, with respect to the merchant seamen, they were considered as being almost a part of the Royal Navy. At the beginning of the war it started with a pretty broad gap between the Merchant Navy and the Royal Navy; but as the regulations and their application have been changed from year to year it is coming now to a point where the men in the Merchant Navy are treated as being almost identical with those in the Royal Navy from the point of recognition.

Mr. KINLEY: They have in England been declared to be on active service, there is no question about that.

Mr. READ: I do not know as to that, but it is recognized as being in fact on active service.

Mr. GRAHAM: I just wanted to ask a question: you mentioned something about the logical practice, perhaps; that there have been some awards granted to civilians—

The WITNESS: Of the Imperial Service Medal, yes.

Mr. GRAHAM: Would you tell us please what is the method of consideration, and what the considerations govern?

The WITNESS: The method is this, sir: in the first place they require to service for twenty-five years with efficiency and fidelity, and the recommendations are made by the department of government in whose service they have been. A majority of them come from the Department of Transport which has to do with the railways and now has to do with marine services, and the Post Office Department. As to the internal machinery, I cannot speak, because I do not

know; but when they reach our department they come with a certificate from the Deputy Minister of Transport or the Deputy Postmaster General; and we have had no correspondence to indicate that any unworthy awards have been made.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. What happens in the department?—A. Then they are put in form and transmitted to England through External Affairs.

*By Mr. Kinley:*

Q. During the last war the men of the merchant marine were granted a medal if they operated for a certain time in what was called a war area. And there was a Memorial Cross which was given to the mother or wife of that merchant seaman if he lost his life. I suppose that was during another régime. Has that been affected or is that in vogue now?

MR. READ: Schemes are in effect along somewhat general lines.

MR. KINLEY: That scheme stopped with the end of the last régime. With regard to those awards are they taking account of the Nickle resolution or do they violate it by giving the merchant seamen those awards? Is there any change in fact or in theory?

MR. READ: In so far as recognition of the next of kin is concerned, I do not know anything about details, but my understanding is our government has followed a course which is similar in principle to that which has been followed in England where a man dies in the merchant navy—

MR. KINLEY: It is absolutely different now. The area is the world. The last time you had to cross the Atlantic into the war area to get the merchant seaman medal.

MR. READ: The medal of the seaman is in a different position. It would depend upon whether there was recognition that there could be a civilian medal granted without offending the views of the House of Commons as expressed in the Nickle resolution.

MR. KINLEY: That is just the point; he should not be a civilian; he should be declared on active service

*By Mr. McCuaig:*

Q. Mr. Coleman, you mentioned a short time ago that decorations were given occasionally to people after they died. I can understand why that might be made if a person died during the course of an act of bravery, but are there cases where a man has received a decoration after he died where he had been denied that decoration during his lifetime?—A. No; the case I had in mind was the King's Police Medal. We had a case of a policeman having been killed in the course of the feat for which it was felt he would, had he lived, have received a medal.

Q. These are the only cases?—A. We then inquired with regard to the King's Medal as it had not been expressly set down in the ordinance that there were posthumous awards and we were told there were. With regard to the Imperial Service Medal there are cases where an employee has been recommended for the medal, the recommendation has gone forward and before the medal has come from England a period of months elapses, usually, and before the actual medal is back and presented there have been cases where that man has died in the interval. If he had been awarded, let us say, the King's Imperial Service Medal, in this case permission is given to hand it to the widow or next of kin. They are very limited in number.

*By Mr. Gershaw:*

Q. Mr. Coleman, will you tell us just what would be available for A.R.P. men or women who had performed some deed of very special merit in Canada and compare that with what would be available in Great Britain?—A. I presume it would depend. The George Medal and the George Cross are probably available for very special feats of gallantry. The idea is to make the George Cross correspond to the Victoria Cross and it would really have to be an outstanding feat.

*By Mr. McCuaig:*

Q. Is there much demand for the extension of decorations and for the clarification of the situation as to the Nickle resolution?—A. I can hardly speak of that, sir, because I think the person who would properly and likely be recommended for an honour of this kind is the last person who would make a demand for it. There have been communications from other people calling the attention of ministers of the Crown to feats which they think should have been recognized in some way.

Q. I really meant coming from people disinterested, not people interested themselves.—A. I think there is a volume of correspondence. After all, this policy was made in the year 1919 and the public generally understand that they are not being granted; therefore very few—

The CHAIRMAN: The representatives of the armed forces, Mr. McCuaig, ask for clarification and also for the removal of discrimination.

*By Mr. Gershaw:*

Q. Is there any discrimination regarding the A.R.P. workers in Canada as compared with other parts of the empire as well as the fighting forces?—A. I do not know that I can speak authoritatively on the point, but there are unquestionably such decorations as the British Empire Medal which might be available in other parts of the empire and in the United Kingdom, and the various orders of chivalry.

Mr. READ: Normally the award for an A.R.P. warden who is responsible for an important section in London would be the M.B.E., or I think it might be the O.B.E. They are graded in the same way as the army are graded or the British Empire Medal and these are all excluded—

The WITNESS: The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

*By Mr. Wright:*

Q. How would those different honours be graded amongst the civilians? In the army they are graded according to the rank; how would they be graded amongst civilians?

Mr. READ: Well, in the organizations you have the gradations which are similar to the army gradations; the whole thing is blocked out. Take the time of the battle of Britain in 1940 and the following six months when there was a very heavy aerial bombardment of London. At that time there were a relatively large number of awards made, but in a period like now there would be none made.

Mr. WRIGHT: What I was getting at is this: I understand in the army a major or above receives the D.S.O., the general the K.C.M.G., but in your civilian set-up how would you grade the different classes for decorations or honours?

The WITNESS: Would it not depend on the degree of responsibility?

Mr. WRIGHT: Degree of responsibility?

*By Mr. McCuaig:*

Q. Has any consideration been given to the question of giving financial assistance in addition to decorations, particularly to those who might receive

decorations and who are in meagre circumstances?—A. That is covered in respect to the Victoria Cross. You had a holder of the Victoria Cross here this morning. He gets a pension of ten pounds per annum. That is the only decoration of which I have knowledge that carries with it any financial award.

*By Mr. Graydon:*

Q. I do not know whether you can say it is covered by the ten pounds.—A. Remember, it was instituted at the time of the Crimean war when the value of money was very much different. It is very much like the poet laureate who gets about £19 of an award and a tun of wine if he can collect it.

*By Mr. McCuaig:*

Q. It is given irrespective of the circumstances of the man concerned?—A. Yes.

Q. No consideration given to a man who might be in poor financial circumstances?—A. This 10 pounds may be increased to 75 pounds on the option of the Secretary of State for War or the First Lord of the Admiralty in any case where the recipients are unable to maintain themselves.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions?

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. Mr. Coleman, may I pursue my question a little further? When the department heads recommend civilians of the civil service and when that gets to your department is that considered by an individual or a committee or by the department, or how is it considered?—A. No, not in respect to the Imperial Service Medal.

Q. Who would pass judgment upon it?—A. The minister, the Postmaster General or the Minister of Transport would be the judge in regard to the employees of their departments. I presume the deputy head is the man who writes the letter. I assume he advises his minister or probably takes it up with him. You see, it is really based on long service and fidelity. To some extent, I would not say automatically, it is a good conduct medal. The records of the man are in the department and they show, say, that he never had been in a scrape and always had good reports from his inspector or chief. On the other hand, the police medal is a little different. I am very careful to have an analysis made of each recommendation and to place it before the Secretary of State before we forward any recommendation in respect to it.

Q. I ask that for the reason that one of the worst things that could happen would be that the medal would be granted or a decoration or distinction be granted improperly. I think you will agree with that?—A. Oh, quite.

*By Mr. Kinley:*

Q. Is the granting of decorations a power within the hands of the King or does he act on the advice of his advisers?—A. I take it that is part of the royal prerogative.

Q. May I put the question this way: He is not obliged to act on the advice of his advisers in these circumstances?—A. I think if you read the biography and correspondence of Queen Victoria, which consists of nine to twelve volumes, and also the biography of King Edward VII, you will find that the advisers of the sovereign, I should not say engaged in controversies on many occasions, but that it was by no means a foregone conclusion that their recommendations were always acted upon. It is an extremely delicate subject upon which to enlarge.

Q. The point is this: the chairman told us that these decorations were Imperial and that they went to London. Now, how do they get to London?—A. You mean the recommendations?

Q. Are they sent by our government here or the Governor General here, which is it, the Governor General in Council or the prerogative of the Governor General?—A. I do not know the *modus operandi* in 1934 and 1935, I have no knowledge of that, but I think if you go through certain books of reference—I am only going by what I have read; in fact I read only this morning an account of the correspondence of Sir John A. Macdonald and I find it a very extremely useful book—you will find there a memorandum at pages 254 and 258 that he prepared when the Marquis of Lorne was the Governor General. I think up until 1919 the Governor General after consultation with his advisers forwarded the recommendation.

Q. Well, now, there is this point: suppose this committee—

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. After 1919 what happened?—A. After 1919 there were no recommendations except in the years 1934 and 1935 and what procedure was adopted I do not know.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Kinley.

*By Mr. Kinley:*

Q. Suppose this committee in its deliberations said now, Canada is an independent part of the British Commonwealth of Nations and that her defence forces and her citizens should be rewarded to some extent by merits that originate with Canadian authorities, would that be a drastic change or would it simply mean the King would be acting as the King of Canada?—A. Well, again I say this matter of recommendation is to some extent part of the King's prerogative. I do not think any Canadian adviser out of deference to the sovereign would advise him to confer major decorations when there is an indication that it was unwelcome. I think you have to go into history. Take the Garter, the highest award, started in the time of King Edward III, the Ancient and Noble Order of the Thistle, supposed to have been established in 787, the Most Illustrious Order of St. Patrick, instituted by King George III in 1763, the Bath goes back to 1799, the Order of St. Michael and St. George goes back to 1818; and there are the two Indian orders of comparatively modern times, the Exalted Order of the Star of India and the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire. The Exalted Order of the Star of India was established by Queen Victoria in 1861, and the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire was established in 1877 when the Queen assumed the title of empress.

Mr. KINLEY: Is there any part of the British empire where there is a local decoration? Somebody said something about South Africa?

The WITNESS: I have not any information on that point.

Mr. READ: I do not know. There is no reason why the King should not establish a Canadian order.

Mr. KINLEY: That is the point.

Mr. READ: There is not the slightest objection to doing so from a constitutional point.

The WITNESS: There are the two Orders of India.

Mr. KINLEY: And the King, as King of Canada, could establish a Canadian order relating to Canadian citizens either in the armed forces or in the civilian population.

Mr. READ: Yes. Perhaps I should point out this fact: in so far as a Canadian decoration is concerned, the recommendation comes from the Canadian minister who is making the recommendation to the King without intervention of any person who is not directly responsible either to the King in person or to the Canadian government.

Mr. KINLEY: That would go through the Governor General?

Mr. READ: Yes.

Mr. KINLEY: It would go through the Governor General to the King but not to the British government?

Mr. READ: Yes.

Mr. WRIGHT: The awards of K.C.M.G. and K.C.B. have to go through the British government, have they not?

Mr. READ: No, they come from the King.

Mr. KINLEY: I recall correspondence that Mr. King laid on the table of the house when Mr. Bennett was created a lord showing that he was consulted when Mr. Bennett was created a lord as a citizen of Great Britain. That correspondence indicates that Mr. King was consulted then.

The WITNESS: That would be the United Kingdom government which was making the recommendation.

Mr. KINLEY: They were making the recommendation to the King, and the government of the United Kingdom was advising the sovereign.

Mr. READ: It is to settle which government had jurisdiction, where there is a certain element of doubt.

Mr. KINLEY: It then usually does originate with the government and the crown acts on the advice of the ministers, really?

Mr. READ: A civilian decoration originates with the Secretary of State for Canada; an army decoration originates with the Minister of National Defence; an air force decoration originates with the Hon. Mr. Power; and a navy decoration originates with the Hon. Mr. Macdonald.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Mr. Coleman, I think the committee would be interested in getting information with regard to procedure. For example, a man is recommended by his commanding officer for a decoration as the result of some acts of great bravery or gallantry on the field of battle. Then, what happens after the recommendation is made?—A. Well, I think there were a limited number of immediate awards.

Q. Yes.—A. Then there were the operational awards and then the periodic awards. As I understand, the King empowers the officer in command of large operations to recognize valour up to a certain number.

Q. With reference to the Canadian authorities?

Mr. READ: The Canadian government has said that they are granted by a commander of a combined force for which there is a 'Canadian companion'; so the reference comes before the Canadian government, it having given its consent in advance.

Mr. KINLEY: The general consent has been given.

Mr. READ: Yes. Take a Canadian formation like No. 1 Fighter Squadron which is operating as an integral part of a fighter command in Great Britain. The Canadian government has in advance said that the officer commanding the fighter command can make "immediates" to the Canadians in that squadron on the same conditions as to all other squadrons under his command. Take a corresponding case: in Australia "immediates" are given by the Governor General of Australia under a specific authority from the King, and if there is a British force in Australia it gets them on the same basis as the Australians.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. Mr. Coleman, could you tell us with regard to a person who is a companion of an order of chivalry without accolade what privileges and duties would result from such an award?—A. I do not think he would have any except the right to wear the insignia of the order.

Q. You feel that is all?—A. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: I think Mr. Graham refers to the highest grade, the knight rather than the companion.

The WITNESS: He means a knight—the Grand Cross and the Knight Commander.

Mr. GERSHAW: With regard to the holder of the V.C. who was present this morning, if he were in great need—assuming he is getting the £10 a year—could he apply for an additional amount up to £75 a year?

The WITNESS: I judge so, but in view of the fact that he is permanently employed—

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. Mr. Coleman, in answering Dr. Gershaw you quote the general rule applicable to awards of Victoria Crosses. I notice it is phrased in terms of English pounds.—A. Yes.

Q. Are we to take it from that that the same rule is applicable in Canada, translated into Canadian dollars?—A. I have not definite information on that point, but I am quite certain you can take it that it is.

*By Mr. Kinley:*

Q. He gets £15 from the Imperial government, does he not?—A. I rather think so, but I am not definite on that.

Q. I think so. He says his pension is \$15 a month. That would be extra.

The CHAIRMAN: And whatever he could earn.

The WITNESS: I remember that on the occasion of the King's visit in 1939 it was desired that members holding the Victoria Cross residing in Canada should be presented to His Majesty, and that was done, including the man whom you had here this morning.

*By Mr. Graham:*

Q. Is Mr. Kinley right, that it is the British government that pays the award?—A. I would have to make definite inquiry into that point.

Q. I think if that is correct, it would be most unfair to ask the British government to do that.

Mr. WRIGHT: I think it is the King himself who makes that payment in regard to the Victoria Cross, but I am not positive.

The CHAIRMAN: I think so, too.

Mr. TURGEON: Out of his general fund?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. GRAHAM: But that is voted by the British government.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. McCUAIG: The fact that the amount is mentioned in pounds would indicate that it is not the Canadian government.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. Mr. Coleman, is there anything you would like to say to the committee off the record and which will not be reported by the Canadian Press reporters.

The WITNESS: There is just this.

(Off the record)

The CHAIRMAN: That completes our evidence. Dr. Bruce, a member of the committee, informed me this morning that he would like to make a statement, but he is unable to be present to-day because of other duties. He said he would

not take more than five minutes to present that statement. After hearing Dr. Bruce, I think we should meet in camera to formulate our report. The subcommittee has not yet met. In fact, it has not been appointed officially. I thought we could not do that until after we had heard all the evidence. If it meets with your approval, we will adjourn now to meet at the call of the chair and try to get through perhaps in one or two more meetings.

Mr. TURGEON: The next meeting will be in camera?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

The committee adjourned at 12.15 p.m., to meet again at the call of the chair.

SESSION 1942

HOUSE OF COMMONS

SPECIAL COMMITTEE

ON

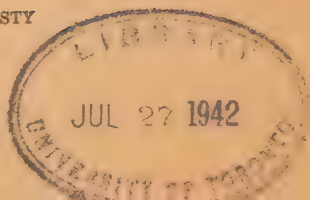
# HONOURS AND DECORATIONS

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE

No. 5

TUESDAY, JULY 21, 1942

OTTAWA  
EDMOND CLOUTIER  
PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY  
1942





## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY, July 21, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations met this day at 10.00 o'clock a.m. Hon. Cyrus Macmillan, the Chairman, presided.

The following members were present: Messrs. Bruce, Fraser (*Peterborough West*), Gershaw, Graham, Hill, Kinley, Macmillan, Marshall, McCuaig, Weir, Wood and Wright—12.

On page 52, line 5, the evidence shows a question asked by Mr. Graydon; This should read "By Mr. Graham".

The Chairman read a letter from Mr. John E. Read respecting press reports of evidence taken before this Committee.

Mr. Bruce made a correction in a statement he previously made to the Committee.

The Chairman read a presentation submitted by Hon. Dr. Bruce to the effect that the resolution of the 1919 Committee was not binding.

Mr. Bruce moved:—

"That this Committee ask the House to enlarge its Order of Reference to include all awards of honour and chivalry."

After debate on the above motion it was, with consent, withdrawn.

Miscellaneous representations were filed with the Clerk of the Committee and are available to members.

The Clerk of the Committee was instructed to procure from the United States Government copies of a Bill passed by the United States Senate on July 14th last, which would permit officers and men of the armed forces of the United States to accept decorations from governments of co-belligerent nations or the other American republics during the war. The measure also would create a decoration to be known as the "Medal of Merit" to be awarded by the President to civilians of co-belligerents or friendly non-belligerents for exceptionally meritorious or courageous acts in furthering the United Nations war efforts.

The Committee went into camera to consider its report to the House.

The Committee adjourned at 11.00 o'clock, a.m., to meet again at the call of the Chair.

J. P. DOYLE,  
*Clerk of the Committee.*



## MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

July 21, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations met this day at 10.05 a.m. The Chairman, Hon. Cyrus Macmillan, presided.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, please. With the consent of the committee I would like to place on the record a letter from Mr. Read, of the Department of External Affairs, reviewing one or two points of his evidence:—

The press reports, with regard to the evidence taken before your committee at the Tuesday session, suggest that there may be some misunderstanding with regard to the position of the British Empire Medal. In Wing Commander MacLean's testimony, he referred to the position of the ground crews, or No. 1 Canadian Fighter Squadron, which was serving in combination with the R.A.F. in England during the battle of Britain. The press report suggested that awards of the British Empire Medal to members of the ground crew were prevented by the operation of the Nickle Resolution and by action of the government. It is possible that there may be some confusion between the British Empire Medal (B.E.M.) and the award of membership in the Order of the British Empire.

The actual position is that it was recognized by the Canadian government, at all times, that the British Empire Medal could and should be awarded to Canadians including N.C.Os. and airmen of the R.C.A.F. This was brought to the attention of the United Kingdom government on November 9, 1940, and, when a question was raised later the position was restated in a telegram to London, December 20, 1940. The medal has been awarded to members of the Royal Canadian Air Force serving in this country, and their exclusion from awards has been confined solely to cases where they were serving together and in combination with the R.A.F. and where recommendations under the procedure then in force went through the Air Ministry in London.

Mr. GRAHAM: I take it that the effect of that is to correct somewhat the evidence given by the wing commander.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Graham. Apparently the medals are available for men who serve in Canada.

Mr. BRUCE: Perhaps I might at this moment make a correction in the statement which I made replying to a question by Mr. Kinley the other day.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, Dr. Bruce.

Mr. BRUCE: A question was asked the other day by Mr. Kinley in regard to the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem. I was under the impression then that at one time the Duke of Connaught was the head of the order. In looking up the Statutes and Regulations of the Grand Priory in the British Realm of this order, it is quite clear that the sovereign head is His Majesty the King, his heirs and successors. I would like to have had put on the record the objects and purposes of the order as well.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it very long, Dr. Bruce?

Mr. BRUCE: No; and it indicates what the order stands for.

The CHAIRMAN: I think perhaps we could have it put on the record without having it read.

Mr. BRUCE: If I may, it is not long, and it will give to members of the committee a complete picture of what this order stands for, and I think it ought to be there.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that agreed?

Mr. KINLEY: Might I say, Mr. Chairman, that Dr. Bruce is head of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in Canada, next to His Excellency the Governor General; and I did not contradict him the other day, I just interjected: "Are you sure?"

Mr. BRUCE: Yes. I just mentioned it.

Mr. KINLEY: I might say, Mr. Chairman, that we are both officers of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and I think it would be well to have Dr. Bruce give you a little résumé of what the order stands for.

The CHAIRMAN: That information will be useful to the committee.

Mr. BRUCE: I might say, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Kinley is a Knight of the Order. For the information of the committee:—

Statute 1. Sovereign Head—His Majesty the King, His Heirs and Successors, is and shall be the Sovereign Head of the Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, which for brevity shall usually be styled and designated: "The Venerable Order of St. John". In these Statutes it is hereinafter called: "The Order".

Statute 2. Objects—The objects and purposes of the Order are:—

(a) The encouragement and promotion of all works of humanity and charity for the relief of persons in sickness, distress, suffering, and danger, without distinction of race, class, or creed, and the extension of the great principle of the Order, embodied in the motto, "Pro utilitate hominum". See statute 44.

(b) The rendering of aid to the sick and wounded in war, and the promotion of such permanent organization during time of peace as may be at once available in time of emergency, including the provision of Technical Reserves for the Medical Services of the Forces of the Crown.

(c) The award of medals, badges, or certificates of honour for special services in the cause of humanity, especially for saving life at imminent personal risk.

(d) The maintenance of the St. John Ophthalmic Hospital at Jerusalem.

(e) The maintenance of the St. John Ambulance Association the objects of which are:—

i. The instruction of persons in rendering first aid in case of accident or sudden illness, and in the transport of the sick and injured;

ii. The instruction of persons in the elementary principles and practice of nursing and hygiene, especially those of a sick room;

iii. The manufacture and distribution, by sale or presentation, of ambulance material;

iv. The formation of ambulance depots in or near mines, factories and other centres of industry;

v. The organization and administration of the Invalid Transport Corps;

vi. To assist, encourage and co-operate with its ancillary the St. John Ambulance Brigade (at home and overseas);

vii. And generally the promotion of instruction in, and the carrying out of, works for the relief of the suffering of the sick and injured in peace and war, irrespective of race, class or creed. (See (a) and (b).)

(f) The formation of associations or organizations in furtherance of the general objects of the Order.

(g) To receive and accept donations, endowments and gifts of money, lands, hereditaments, stocks, funds, shares, securities and any other assets whatsoever, and to borrow or raise money with or without security for any of the purposes of the Order and either subject or not subject to any special trust or conditions.

(h) The maintenance at St. John's Gate of the Library and of the Museum, and the collection of works of art and objects of historical interest relating to the Order.

The CHAIRMAN: Dr. Bruce has presented a statement to be presented to the committee. Shall I read the statement, Dr. Bruce?

Mr. BRUCE: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: (Reads):—

For the information of the members of the committee, it might be well to place on record a statement made by Mr. Bennett on May 17, 1933, page 5126 *Hansard*, in answer to a question by Mr. Mercier regarding titles, and which was, in part, as follows:—

It being the considered view of His Majesty's Government in Canada, the motion in respect of honours adopted on the 22nd day of May, 1919, by a majority vote of the members of the Commons House only, of the 13th Parliament (which was dissolved on the 4th day of October 1921) is not binding upon His Majesty or His Majesty's Government in Canada, or the 17th Parliament of Canada.

Without taking time to refer to the several debates on the subject, I would like to quote the case upon which I understand Mr. Bennett based his opinion: It was that of *Stockdale v. Hansard*, which occurred in 1839 and in which the plaintiff claimed £5,000 damages for libel published by the defendant. The particulars of this case will be found in a book entitled "Cases on the law of the Constitution" by Beroe A. Bicknell of the Middle Temple, London, published by Oxford University Press, 1926. The Commons ordered that the report should be printed and, in accordance with a previous resolution, sold to the public at specified rates. The defendant was employed by the House. He printed and sold the report in accordance with the order. The essential part of the report is as follows:—

That the House of Commons in parliament assembled cannot by any resolution or order of themselves create any new privilege to themselves inconsistent with the known laws of the land and, if such power be assumed by them, there can be no reasonable security for the life, liberty, property or character of the subjects of this realm.

While I am opposed to hereditary honours, I deprecate the withholding from Canadians of the privilege which is justly theirs as a member of the British Empire, owing allegiance to the King, to deprive them of the privileges which is theirs of receiving for meritorious service, recognition at the hands of their Sovereign.

I wish to move that we ask the House to enlarge the terms of reference to include a consideration by this committee of all the awards in chivalry.

Do you care to make any comments on the statement, Dr. Bruce?

Mr. BRUCE: I think that puts the situation, Mr. Chairman, rather briefly. I thought it might be helpful to the committee to see the exact situation which caused Mr. Bennett, I believe, to consider that he was not bound by Acts of a preceding parliament; at least, I do not think the present government is bound, or any subsequent government.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think it is our function to discuss the legality or the illegality of former Acts. What we are asked to do by the House of Commons is discuss resolutions as they stand, and to decide whether we believe they should be cancelled, rescinded, reduced or enlarged—exclusive of titles.

Mr. WOOD: Well, Mr. Chairman, it may or it may not be legal; I am not in a position to determine the constitutionality, but we had a similar case not very long ago in regard to the exportation of power which was passed by the House of Commons and yet was not approved by the Senate, which in more modern times is quite in the memory of members of this committee; and we thought that we were more or less in duty bound to observe the highest authority in British institutions, that is the Sovereign will of the people as expressed by their representatives in the House of Commons. It seems to me that until any recommendation we may make is passed by parliament, I would rather hesitate to say that we were not bound. After all, at the basis of British institutions and the protection of democracy is the authority of the people.

Mr. KINLEY: I do not think it is relevant, Mr. Chairman. The question is as to what is our recommendation so far as modification of the Nickle resolution is concerned, or whether we want to stick to it.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. That is my understanding.

Mr. WOOD: I quite understand that. But if it can be implemented by parliament, I think it is within its rights. Up to the present time I do not think that we should ignore the statute in so far as the House of Commons is concerned.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. But this committee surely has not been appointed to discuss or determine the constitutional validity of what has been done in the past with regard to this. We are taking the Nickle resolution as it stands. I think, gentlemen, that the pertinent part of this statement is the last paragraph, the motion which Dr. Bruce wishes to make, that we ask the house to enlarge the terms of reference to include consideration by this committee of all the awards of chivalry. Do you make that motion, Dr. Bruce?

Mr. BRUCE: I move that, Mr. Chairman, if I can get a seconder.

Mr. WEIR: That means that we go back to the house to ask for an extension of our order of reference?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, that we ask the house to enlarge the terms of reference to include consideration by this committee of all awards of chivalry; that is knighthoods.

Mr. KINLEY: That is, no titles?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes; all the awards of chivalry.

Mr. KINLEY: That do not carry a title?

The CHAIRMAN: No. All awards of chivalry. The first order is the knighthood.

Mr. BRUCE: My reason for making the motion is this. It is now twenty-three years since a committee of the house discussed this subject and we are constantly referring to the opinion of these men at that particular time. A great

deal has happened in this country and in the world in that quarter of a century; and it seems to me that, if we are taking under advisement the question of awards of titles at all, we should consider the whole subject and give the opinion as it exists to-day. Otherwise, we would only be giving a partial opinion. I am not concerned as to what that opinion may be, particularly, but at any rate surely we ought to have the terms of reference enlarged so that we can consider the whole problem at this time. Then ten, fifteen or twenty years from now people will point back to the Macmillan committee and say what our opinion was at this time, not what the opinion of the committee under Nickle was in 1919.

Mr. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, as you point out, it is not necessary for us to go into the validity of this. But offhand, I would think that technically Mr. Bennett was correct on the binding nature of the resolution of the House of Commons. Yet it strikes me in this way, and I would think it is something that we must keep in mind. I would say that the temper of the great majority of the members of the committee and the great majority of the people of the country is such that they would consider it unwise to raise what at least is a very controversial subject, namely the reviving of titles, at this time in a war when we cannot afford to have any more controversial matters raised. I intend, on that ground alone, to vote against this motion, if it is seconded. Is it necessary to have the motion seconded?

The CHAIRMAN: No. A seconder is not necessary in committee.

Mr. GRAHAM: I did not think it was.

The CHAIRMAN: That is so.

Mr. GRAHAM: For that reason, and for that alone, I do not think it would be wise, in the interests of this country, to revive that subject, or to place on record in this committee a recommendation that we even consider it at this moment.

Mr. KINLEY: I rather agree with Mr. Graham, Mr. Chairman. I am inclined to be against titles. I do not want to do anything that would give the impression that we as a committee would consider the granting of titles. I think it would interfere with our effort and what we can do to help out in gaining the objective we have in mind.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you adhere to the motion, Mr. Kinley? I do not think you would like to have publicity at the present time on your judgment with regard to the report that this committee may make, would you?

Mr. KINLEY: No.

The CHAIRMAN: You are just stating your own opinion?

Mr. KINLEY: I just say that I am inclined to be against the granting of titles.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. KINLEY: That is what I am getting at.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you against going back to the house for permission to enlarge the terms of reference?

Mr. KINLEY: Yes. I do not think we should go back to the house. There is no doubt we have got a reference. Let us deal with the question on the reference boldly and definitely and not show confusion by going back to the house.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further comments?

Mr. WRIGHT: I am inclined to agree with the last two speakers. I doubt very much, even though we had our reference enlarged, whether we would do anything about it. The temper of this committee, I think, is such, that I do not believe it is necessary to have the reference enlarged.

Mr. WEIR: I do not think the attitude of the committee is different to what it would be in the house.

Mr. MARSHALL: I also find myself in opposition to this resolution which is being sponsored by Dr. Bruce.

Mr. WOOD: I think it would be difficult to get the house to approve it at the present time when their minds are engaged in this horrible conflict. My opinion is that they would think we were putting in our time worrying about things that are rather unessential. I think it is only proper and right that recognition should be given to our boys. I think that is rather important. But I do not think the temper of the House of Commons at the present time would condone anything as suggested by the motion.

Mr. FRASER: I am definitely opposed to it.

The CHAIRMAN: Going back to the house, you mean?

Mr. FRASER: Yes.

Mr. BRUCE: Mr. Chairman, in view of the evident opposition of my fellow-members of the committee, I withdraw my motion, instead of embarrassing them by putting it to a vote.

The CHAIRMAN: Agreed. Dr. Bruce withdraws his motion. I have received some communications from individuals with regard to this question which I do not think I shall read or place on the record. I do not want to characterize any of these communications—

Mr. MARSHALL: Will they be available to members of the committee?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. There is one very long document—

Mr. KINLEY: Do you recommend putting it on the record?

The CHAIRMAN: No. These will all be available for the members. Are there any other points before we go into camera? If, not, I will ask the reporters, with great gratitude for their work, to withdraw.

The committee continued in camera.













pc. Canada. Honour etc.

SESSION 1942<sup>a</sup>

HOUSE OF COMMONS

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE

ON

# HONOURS AND DECORATIONS

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MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No. 6

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THURSDAY, JULY 23, 1942

FRIDAY, JULY 24, 1942

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INCLUDING SECOND AND FINAL REPORT

OTTAWA  
EDMOND CLOUTIER  
PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY  
1942



## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, July 23rd, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations met this day at 10 o'clock, a.m. Hon. Cyrus Macmillan, the Chairman, presided.

The following members were present: Messrs. Bruce, Fraser (*Peterborough West*), Graham, Hill, Kinley, Macmillan, McCuaig, Stirling, Turgeon, Weir and Wright—11.

The Committee considered recommendations to be included in its report.

Mr. Turgeon moved:—

That the Chairman be authorized to consult with Mr. E. H. Coleman, K.C., Under Secretary of State, respecting the proposed recommendations.

Motion adopted.

The Committee adjourned at 10.55 a.m. to meet again Friday, July 24th, at 10 o'clock, a.m.

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FRIDAY, July 24th, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations met this day at 10 o'clock, a.m. Hon. Cyrus Macmillan, the Chairman, presided.

The following members were present: Messrs. Bruce, Gershaw, Macmillan, Marshall, McCuaig, Turgeon, Weir and Wright—8.

The Committee considered a draft report presented by the Chairman.

Mr. Turgeon moved that the draft report be adopted as the Committee's Report to the House. After discussion the said report was adopted.

Mr. Weir, on behalf of the Committee tendered a vote of thanks to the Chairman for the very able manner in which he conducted the proceedings of the Committee.

The Chairman thanked the members of the Committee for their co-operation.

The Committee adjourned at 10.30 a.m. to meet again at the call of the Chair.

J. P. DOYLE,  
*Clerk of the Committee.*

## REPORTS TO THE HOUSE

OTTAWA, July 24th, 1942.

The Special Committee on Honours and Decorations begs leave to submit the following as a

## SECOND REPORT

Pursuant to Order of Reference dated June 24th last, your Committee has considered the subjects therein referred, and in so doing has held eight meetings, examined witnesses from the army, navy and air force, and officials of the Departments of External Affairs and Secretary of State. Representations have also been received from various sources.

As a result of their deliberations your Committee desire to make the following recommendations:—

- (1) That His Majesty's subjects domiciled or ordinarily resident in Canada be eligible for the award of Honours and Decorations, including awards in the Orders of Chivalry, which do not involve titles.
- (2) That His Majesty's Government in Canada consider a submission to His Majesty the King, of proposals for the establishment of an Order limited in number but not involving a title, for which His Majesty's subjects domiciled or ordinarily resident in Canada shall alone be eligible.

A printed copy of the minutes of proceedings and evidence taken before the Committee is tabled herewith.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

CYRUS MACMILLAN,  
*Chairman.*







